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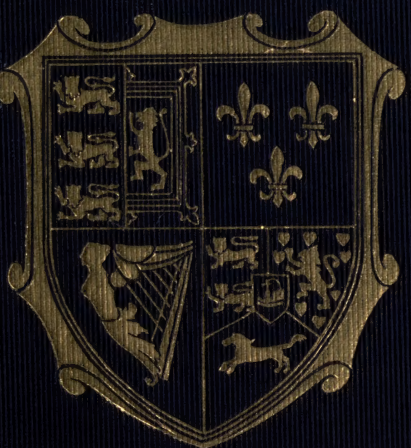

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His Life and Reign

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MEMOIRS OF KING GEORGE III.

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GEORGE WILLIAM FREDERICK, eldest son of Frederick Lewis, Prince of Wales, by Augusta, daughter of Frederick the Second, Duke of Saxe Gotha, was born in Norfolk House, St. James's Square, London, at half-past seven o'clock on the 4th of June, 1738.[1] He is said to have been what is familiarly styled a "seven months'" child.

[1] 24th May, O. S. *London Gazette* from 23d to 27th May, 1738. The fact of the Prince of Wales having been at this time an occupant of Norfolk House was occasioned by his discreditable quarrel with his father the preceding year, when the irritated king had ejected him from St. James's Palace.

So prematurely and unexpectedly had the princess been taken in labour that the Archbishop of Canterbury, Doctor Potter, was the only great personage of state who arrived in time to be present at the birth. At five o'clock in the morning, Lord Baltimore, one of the prince's gentlemen of the bedchamber, was despatched to Kensington Palace to acquaint George the Second of the interesting state of the princess, and about eight o'clock the Marquis of Carnarvon set out in state to apprise him of her safe delivery. So weak and sickly was the royal infant, and so little prospect did there seem of its long surviving its birth, that at eleven o'clock the same night it was deemed expedient to send for Doctor Secker, Bishop of Oxford, as rector of St. James's parish, by whom it was privately baptised. Subsequently, on the 2d of July, the child was publicly baptised by the Bishop of Oxford at Norfolk House; the sponsors being the King of Sweden, the Duke of Saxe Gotha, and the Queen of Prussia.[1]

Of the father of the future King of England a

Norfolk House was pulled down in 1742, when the present mansion was erected on its site. "I saw, not much more than a year ago," writes Wraxall, in 1781, "the identical bed in which the Princess of Wales was delivered [of George the Third], now removed to the Duke of Norfolk's seat, of Worksop, in the county of Nottingham." Wraxall further mentions that, with the exception of the furniture being of green silk, the bed was of a very ordinary description.

[1] The following are copies of the MS. entries in the Registers

passing notice may not be uninteresting. Of his mother much will hereafter have to be told. Frederick, Prince of Wales, according to his contemporaries, had little in his character to be loved, and still less to be admired. His capital faults consisted of vanity, obstinacy, irresolution, and a not very scrupulous regard for truth. A passion for women and the gaming-table constituted his principal vices. The story of his every-day life — of his love of buffoonery, of his frivolous amusements and pursuits, of his pilgrimages to consult fortune-tellers in Norwood Forest, of his suppers in Jermyn Street, at Mrs. Cannon's,

of Births of St. James's parish, recording the birth and baptism of George III.:

May 1738. [O. S.]

Bapt.
24. His Royal Highness George, son of their Royal Highnesses Frederick and Augusta Prince and Princess of Wales, was born this 24th day of May 1738, between seven and eight in the morning at Norfolk-house in St. James's Square, and was privately baptised the same day by the Lord Bishop of Oxford — Rector of this Parish.

June 1738. [O. S.]

Bapt.
21. This evening the ceremony of publishing ye Baptism of ye son of their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales was performed, and the office completed by the Lord Bp. of Oxford at Norfolk House, and the name pronounced upon this occasion was George-William-Frederick.

the princess's midwife, and of his stolen visits in disguise to bull-baits at Hockley-in-the-Hole — seems to afford tolerably conclusive evidence that the prince's untimely death was no great loss to the people of England. According to Horace Walpole, he had taken Edward the Black Prince as his model, although he resembled him in no other respect than that of dying before his father.

Yet, notwithstanding the vanity and frivolity of Frederick, Prince of Wales, he was not devoid of more amiable qualities. He was at least affable and good-tempered. He cultivated a taste for literature which, light as it was, was creditable to him; he courted the society of men of genius, and on more than one occasion stood their friend. He was also an affectionate and indulgent father, and, though apparently a faithless, was a complaisant and attentive husband. George, Lord Lyttelton, who knew him intimately, described him to Philip Yorke as a prince of a singularly easy disposition; never saying a harsh word to his family or servants, and disposed to make them happy by kind actions, "especially where it would do him credit."

It was in the bosom of his family that the prince was to be seen in the most advantageous light. Of the interior of his small court a pleasing picture has been bequeathed to us by the accomplished Mary Lepel, Lady Hervey, — the

passion of the poets of the earlier Georgian period:

"Youth's youngest daughter, sweet Lepel."

On the 10th of November, 1748, alluding to the unhappy passion for gambling which had been contracted by many ladies of rank, Lady Hervey writes — "In spite of these irregularities, the prince's family is an example of innocent and cheerful amusements. All this last summer they played abroad, and now in the winter, in a large room, they divert themselves at baseball, a play all who are, or have been, schoolboys are well acquainted with. The ladies as well as gentlemen join in this amusement; and the latter return the compliment in the evening, by playing for an hour at the old and innocent game of push-pin."

Private theatricals were another favourite diversion at Leicester House. The prince delighted in dramatic performances, and endeavoured to instil the same taste into his children. More than once we find the little princes and princesses fretting their hour upon the stage, their instructor being the celebrated actor, James Quin, who was also the stage-manager. In after years the old actor took a pride in referring to the days when he was a court favourite. The first speech which his former pupil delivered from the throne being much commended for the graceful manner in which it was spoken, "Ay!" said Quin, "it

was I who taught the boy to speak." At the time of Quin's death he was in the receipt of a pension from George the Third.

The first of the juvenile dramatic performances to which we have referred appears to have taken place on the 4th of January, 1749. The piece selected for representation was Addison's play of "Cato," the character of Cato being one of those in which Quin was most famous. By the following *dramatis personæ* it will be seen that the future sovereign performed the part of Portius, and his little sisters, the Princesses Augusta and Elizabeth, the parts of Marcia and Lucia.

Cato	Master Nugent.
Portius	Prince George.
Juba	Prince Edward.
Sempronius . . .	Master Evelyn.
Lucius	Master Montague.
Decius	Lord Milsington.
Syphax	Master North.
Marcus . . .	Master Madden.
Marcia	Princess Augusta.
Lucia	Princess Elizabeth.[1]

[1] The Princess Elizabeth Carolina died on the 4th of September, 1759, in the nineteenth year of her age. Horace Walpole writes to Sir Horace Mann on the 13th : "We have lost another princess, Lady Elizabeth. She died of an inflammation in her bowels in two days. Her figure was so very unfortunate, that it would have been difficult for her to be happy, but her parts and application were extraordinary. I saw her act in 'Cato' at eight years old, when she could not stand alone, but was forced to lean against the side-scene. She had been so unhealthy, that at that age she had not been taught to read, but had learned the

The prologue, spoken by Prince George, and also the epilogue, spoken by Prince Edward and his sister, the Princess Augusta, were apparently composed by their royal father, and certainly they are of sufficiently indifferent merit to render it probable that they were his productions. The epilogue concludes with the following miserable doggerel :

"*Prince Edward.* In England born, my inclination,
Like yours, is wedded to this nation;
And future times, I hope, will see
Me General in reality[1].
Indeed, I wish to serve this land;
It is my father's strict command;
And none he ever gave shall be
More cheerfully obeyed by me."

Frederick, Prince of Wales, on one occasion, showed some of his poetical trash to John, Earl Poulett, and inquired of him what he thought of their merits. "Sir," was the happy reply, "they are worthy of your Royal Highness!"

The last occasion of the performance of juvenile theatricals at Leicester House appears to have been on the 11th of January, 1750, on which day

part of Lucia by hearing the others studying their parts. She went to her father and mother, and begged she might act. They put her off as gently as they could; she desired leave to repeat her part; and, when she did, it was with so much sense, that there was no denying her."

[1] Prince Edward died a Vice-Admiral of the Blue, September 17, 1767, at the age of twenty-eight.

Bubb Dodington mentions in his diary, that he was invited to witness the representation of Rowe's tragedy of "Lady Jane Grey" by the royal children.

The nature of Augusta of Saxe Gotha, like that of her husband, was stamped with the royal failing of insincerity. Her husband's friend, Lord Cobham, having been asked by Henrietta, Countess of Suffolk, what he considered to be the real character of the princess, "Why," he answered, "she is the only person I could never find out; all I could ever discover was that she hated those persons the most to whom she paid the most court." In other respects the private character of the princess presents but few blemishes. Her manners were conciliating; she was generous, charitable, and accomplished, a devoted wife, and a tender mother to her numerous offspring. Lord Waldegrave speaks with deserved praise of her "most decent and prudent behaviour" during her husband's lifetime; and even the cynical Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, pays a tribute to her good nature and civility to all who approached her person. So long as her husband lived she wisely confined her political prejudices and predilections within her own breast, although at a later period she not only broke through this wholesome rule which she had laid down for the guidance of her conduct, but, by her ill-advised interference in affairs of state, proved to be the occasion of many

mischievous consequences. Her chief misfortune, in fact, lay in her ignorance of the laws of England and of the character of its people; her chief error, in believing herself competent to manage their affairs. The lofty notions of the royal prerogative, and the exclusive and narrow-minded principles with which she sought to impregnate the mind of her son, were not the less pernicious from their having been well-intentioned. She succeeded, indeed, in making him a pious Christian, but no means could be more injudicious than those which she adopted in the hope of making him a good king.

Frederick, Prince of Wales, expired on the 20th of March, 1751, in the forty-ninth year of his age.[1] The grief of his family, as well as the consternation of his political adherents, were rendered the greater in consequence of the calamity having been altogether unexpected. He had recently, indeed, been suffering from a severe cold, but for some days past had been declared to be convales-

[1] The death of Frederick, Prince of Wales, has been variously represented to have taken place at Kew, Carlton House, and at Leicester House, Leicester Square. There can be no doubt, however, that it occurred in the latter mansion, the same in which, ninety years previously, expired his interesting and ill-fated ancestress, Elizabeth, Queen of Bohemia; the same in which Prince Eugene lodged during his secret visit to England in 1712, and in which the queen of George the Second gave birth to her second son, the hero, or, as some would have it, the "Butcher" of Culloden.

cent. On the day on which he died, Dodington inserts in his diary: "I was told at Leicester House at three o'clock that the prince was much better, and had slept eight hours in the night before. Before ten o'clock at night the prince was a corpse." He was lying in bed listening to the performance on the violin of Desnoyers, a fashionable dancing-master, when, in the midst of a fit of coughing, he suddenly laid his hand upon his stomach, as if in pain, and exclaimed, "*Je sens la mort!*" The princess, who was in the apartment, flew to his assistance, but, before she could reach his pillow, life had become extinct. According to Wraxall, he expired in Desnoyers's arms.[1]

The grief of the princess at the death of her husband was excessive. Suddenly deprived of the splendid prospect of becoming Queen of England, — left the widowed mother of eight children, and with the expectation of shortly giving birth to another, — it was long before she could be

[1] On opening the prince's body, the cause of his death was found to have been an abscess, which had suddenly burst, and occasioned suffocation. It was on the occasion of the prince's death that Dr. William George, Provost of Eton, addressed to the youthful heir presumptive those admirable Latin iambics, commencing, —

"Spes nuper altera, prima nunc Britanniæ," —

of which Pope Benedict the 14th observed, that had the author of them been a Catholic, instead of a Protestant divine, he would have made him a Roman cardinal.

induced to comprehend the terrible reality of her bereavement. For hours no arguments could convince her that life was extinct; for hours she persisted in remaining with the dead body of her husband. When at length, however, she was prevailed upon to retire to her own apartment, her natural fortitude of mind gradually returned to her assistance. Rising from her bed at eight o'clock in the morning, she calmly performed the painful duty of examining the papers of her late consort, and of committing to the flames such as she deemed it impolitic to preserve.

George the Second, though he had hitherto shown but little partiality for his daughter-in-law, nevertheless behaved toward the princess, in the first days of her widowhood, with great and unexpected kindness. Lord Lincoln, the lord in waiting, was immediately despatched to Leicester House with a message of condolence, and in due time the king himself visited the afflicted widow. Refusing to make use of a chair of state which had been provided for him, he seated himself on the sofa beside the princess, and at the sight of her sorrow is said to have been affected even to tears. When his eldest grandchild, the Princess Augusta, attempted to kiss his hand, he not only refused the proffered homage but, taking her in his arms, embraced her with great apparent affection. To his grandsons he said, "Be brave boys; be obedient to your mother, and endeav-

our to do credit to the high station to which you are born." The king, moreover, subsequently paid his daughter-in-law the compliment of selecting her to be the guardian of the heir to the throne, and also of awarding her, on her reappearance in public, the same honours that had formerly been enjoyed by the late Queen Caroline.

To his grandson, Prince George, who was now in his thirteenth year, George the Second behaved with no less kindness. "The king," writes the Duke of Newcastle to the lord chancellor, on the 9th of April, "continues to be perfectly satisfied with the princess, and is in raptures with the young prince." He, who had never acted the tender father, delighted, according to Walpole, in playing the "tender grandfather." Within three weeks after the death of his father, the household of the young prince was declared. The Earl of Sussex,[1] Lord Down,[2] and Lord Robert Bertie[3] were appointed lords of his bedchamber, and Colonel John Selwyn[4] treasurer of his house-

[1] George Augustus Yelverton, second Earl of Sussex, had formerly been a lord of the bedchamber to Frederick, Prince of Wales. He died, unmarried, January 8, 1758.

[2] Henry Pleydell, third Viscount Downe, subsequently commanded the Twenty-fifth Regiment at the battle of Minden in 1759. He was mortally wounded the following year at the battle of Campen, near Wesel, and died, unmarried, December 9, 1760.

[3] Fourth son of Robert, first Duke of Ancaster. He was a general officer in the army.

[4] Father of the celebrated George Selwyn, and formerly an

hold. On the 25th of April the prince kissed hands on being created Prince of Wales and Earl of Chester.[1]

The prince, to the close of his life, entertained a tender regard for the memory of his father. When his death was first announced to him, the child cried bitterly. Ayscough, his tutor, observing him lay his hand upon his breast, expressed his apprehension that his Royal Highness was unwell. "I feel," said the young prince, "something here, just as I did when I saw the two workmen fall from the scaffold at Kew." To Viscount Cobham we find him writing shortly after his father's death:

"LEICESTER HOUSE, April 26, 1751.

"MY LORD: — I am obliged to you for your affectionate expressions of concern for my misfortune in losing the best of fathers.

"Your attachment to me gives me great pleasure, and I am, with great regard,

"GEORGE P."

Again, many years after the prince had ascended the throne, — on an occasion of the cele-

aide-de-camp to the great Duke of Marlborough. He died November 5, 1751.

[1] "*St. James's, April 20th.* — His Majesty has been pleased to order Letters Patent to pass under the Great Seal of Great Britain, for creating his Royal Highness, George William Frederick (the Prince of Great Britain, Electoral Prince of Brunswick Lunenburgh, Duke of Edinburgh, Marquis of the Isle of Ely, Earl of Eltham, Viscount of Lanceston, Baron of Snaudon, and Knight of the Most Noble Order of the Garter), Prince of Wales and Earl of Chester."

brated Countess of Huntingdon waiting upon him to complain of the balls and routs which, under the primacy of Archbishop Cornwallis, were permitted in Lambeth Palace, — we find him alluding in very feeling terms to his father's untimely death. "I remember seeing your ladyship," he said, "when I was young. You then frequented the court circle, and I cannot forget that you were a favourite with my revered father."

Toward his grandfather, the prince entertained no such affectionate feelings. It was a circumstance well known to the sons of George the Third, that George the Second, in a moment of ungovernable rage, so far forgot himself as actually to strike his high-spirited grandson. "I wonder," was an observation of the late Duke of Sussex, while passing through the apartments of Hampton Court, "in which of these rooms it was that George the Second struck my father. The blow so disgusted him with the place that he could never afterward be induced to think of it as a residence."[1]

The fact that Frederick, Prince of Wales, notwithstanding his frivolity, took a deep and laudable interest in the education of his sons, is evinced by the following schedule of instructions, drawn up by him for the guidance of their governor, Lord North, of which the original, in the prince's own

[1] This anecdote was related to the author by the person to whom the Duke of Sussex addressed the observation.

handwriting, is in the possession of Baroness North at Wroxton Abbey:

"Clifden, Ocbtr the 14th, 1750.

"*The Hours for the Two Eldest Princes.*

"To get up at 7 o'clock.

"At 8 to read with Mr. *Scot* till 9, and he to stay with 'em till the *Doctor* comes.

"The *Doctor* to stay from 9 till Eleven.

"From Eleven to Twelve, Mr. *Fung*.

"From Twelve to half an hour past Twelve, *Ruperti;* but Mr. *Fung* to remain there.

"Then to be Their Play hour till 3 o'clock.

"At 3 Dinner.

"Three times a week, at half an hour past four, *Denoyer* comes.

"At 5, Mr. *Fung* till half an hour past 6.

"At half an hour past 6 till 8, Mr. *Scot*.

"At 8, Supper.

"Between 9 and 10, in Bed.

"On Sunday, Prayers exactly at half an hour past 9, above stairs. Then the two Eldest Princes, and the two Eldest Princesses, are to go to Prince George's apartment, to be instructed by Dr. Ayscough in the Principles of Religion till 11 o'clock.

"For my Lord North."

[Endorsed in the handwriting of Lord North.]

"The Prince of Wales's Regulation of the Studies of Prince George and Prince Edward. Deliver'd to me October, 1750, upon my being appointed their Governor; written by his own hand."

Nevertheless, both previously to, as well as after, the death of Frederick, Prince of Wales, the education of the heir to the throne had evidently been

much neglected. He had entered into his seventh year when Dr. Francis Ayscough, afterward Dean of Bristol, was nominated his preceptor. Ayscough was apparently indebted for the appointment to his having married Anne, daughter of George, Lord Lyttelton, the poet and historian, whose tutor he had formerly been. He was thus closely allied by marriage to the powerful house of Grenville, to which connection he was beholden for the further post which he held as clerk of the closet to Frederick, Prince of Wales. By Ayscough himself we are apprised that when he entered upon his duties as preceptor to the heir to the throne, he was fully sensible of the high importance of the trust confided to him. "I thank God," he writes to Doctor Doddridge, on the 16th of February, 1745, "I have one great encouragement to quicken me in my duty, which is, the good disposition of the children entrusted to me. As an instance of it, I must tell you that Prince George, to his honour and my shame, had learned several pages in your little book of verses, without any directions from me. And I must say of all the children — for they are all committed to my care — that they are as conformable, and as capable of receiving instruction, as any I ever yet met with. How unpardonable then should I be in the sight of God and man if I neglected my part toward them! All I can now say is that no care or diligence shall be wanting in me, and I beg the

prayer of you and every honest man for the divine blessing on my endeavours." Yet, notwithstanding these fair professions, apparently a worse appointment than that of Ayscough could scarcely have been made. When, at a later period, Lord Lyttelton interfered to prevent his dismissal, the reply which he received from Mr. Pelham, then prime minister, was not a very complimentary one. "I know nothing of Doctor Ayscough," he said. "Oh, yes," he added, after a pause "I recollect, a very worthy man told me in this room, two years ago, that he was a great rogue."

Ayscough's manners are said to have been insolent, and his brother clergy accused him of heterodoxy. In vain the Princess of Wales taxed him with her son's backwardness in his studies. His reply was that the prince was able to make Latin verses. In vain, too, she complained to her husband of Ayscough's remissness. Ayscough had rendered himself much too useful to the prince, in managing his privy purse and his election affairs, to admit of his services being dispensed with. The heir to the throne at eleven years of age is said to have been unable to read English.

It was under these circumstances that the princess contrived to secure the services — as sub-preceptor to her sons — of one George Scott, who owed the selection, it has been said, to the recommendation of Lord Bolingbroke. The little that

has been recorded of Scott is in his favour. He seems to have conscientiously discharged the important duties entrusted to him, and, notwithstanding he was bold enough to speak disparagingly of the understanding of the young prince, and hardy enough to argue on learned topics with Lord Bute, he long continued to be a favourite with the Princess of Wales. More than fifty years afterward, we find George the Third speaking in high terms of commendation of his former sub-preceptor.[1]

The death of Frederick, Prince of Wales, completely revolutionised the fortunes and the social position of his eldest son. The young prince had now become heir-apparent to a crown, the present wearer of which had entered into his sixty-eighth year. Under these circumstances, it was only to be expected that the prime minister, Mr. Pelham, and his brother in blood and power, the Duke of Newcastle, should have endeavoured to establish a guiding, if not exclusive influence, over the mind of the future sovereign. In order to accomplish this purpose, it was necessary, in the first instance, to effect an almost entire change among those who had the present charge of the prince's education. Hitherto he had had for his governor, Francis, Lord

[1] "I never knew a man," writes Rose, "more entirely blameless in all the relations of life; amiable, honourable, temperate, and one of the sweetest dispositions I ever knew." Mr. Scott was afterward a commissioner of excise.

North,[1] whose chief qualifications for that responsible post would seem to have been amiability and good moral conduct. In his room the Pelhams obtained the appointment of Simon Lord Harcourt, a nobleman whom Walpole sarcastically describes as "a civil, sheepish" peer, more in want of a governor himself than qualified to be the governor of others. Devoted to the pleasures of the table and of the hunting-field, Lord Harcourt is said to have been perfectly satisfied that he had done his duty so long as he was unremitting in his exhortations to his royal pupil to turn out his toes. He was intended, indeed, to be a mere puppet in the hands of the Pelhams. "He is a cipher," said Lord Mansfield to the Bishop of Norwich; "he must be a cipher, and was put in to be a cipher."

Simultaneously with the removal of Lord North, the services of Ayscough were also dispensed with; Dr. Thomas Hayter, Bishop of Norwich, being appointed in his room.[2] Although we find George the Third, in after life, speaking in no very com-

[1] Created Earl of Guilford in 1773. Lord North, who was the father of the celebrated premier, died August 4, 1790. His appointment as governor to the prince had taken place in 1750.

[2] According to Horace Walpole, Bishop Hayter was the natural son of a "jolly old" prelate, Doctor Blackburn, Archbishop of York, "who had all the manners of a man of quality, though he had been a Buccaneer, and was a clergyman." We believe, however, that there is a great exaggeration in this statement. Bishop Hayter, about a year before his death, was translated to the See of London. He died in 1762, at the age of fifty-nine.

plimentary terms of Bishop Hayter, he was nevertheless a man of sense, learning, and refined breeding. Moreover, he seems to have discharged the duties of his important calling with singular zeal and fidelity. Resisting all interference on the part of the princess and her friends, he persevered, despite the frowns of the former and the remonstrances of the latter, in carrying out the system of discipline which he had prescribed.

The person selected for the post of sub-governor was Andrew Stone, an elder brother of Dr. George Stone, Archbishop of Armagh. Stone had formerly been private secretary to the Duke of Newcastle, and was still the confidant of that nobleman. Walpole, at the same time that he admits his superior abilities, denounces him as having been a morose, proud, and mercenary man. These charges, however, appear to be altogether undeserved. Lord Waldegrave has done justice to Stone's integrity, and his friend, Bishop Newton, regrets that his abilities were lost to the Church. Stone was, in fact, a fine scholar, and at Oxford, where he had been the friend and rival of the celebrated Lord Mansfield, had succeeded in carrying off some of the first honours of the University.[1] The services of Scott were retained as sub-preceptor.

[1] Stone was a personal favourite of George the Second, to whom he had acted as private secretary in Hanover in 1748, during the absence of the Duke of Newcastle. At a later period

Happily, with the change of preceptors, some improvement seems to have taken place in the scholarship of the heir to the throne. "The Bishop of Norwich," writes Mr. Philip Yorke to the lord chancellor, "was with the king in his closet this morning, in relation to the improvements made by his royal pupils in their studies. He is disposed, as I find by Lord Anson, to speak favourably of their application, and of the progress they have made since they have been under his care." But, although the change in the prince's establishment was undoubtedly for the better, the new governor and preceptors were unluckily unable to agree among themselves. Certain misunderstandings which had occurred between Lord Harcourt and the bishop on the one side, and between Stone and Scott on the other, terminated at length in an open rupture. The princess not only sided with the sub-governor and sub-preceptor, but, on her own account, complained of the earl and prelate. The former, she said, avoided her card-parties; the latter puzzled her sons with logic.

he held the appointments of treasurer to Queen Charlotte, and keeper of the state paper office. He died in December, 1773, at the age of seventy-two. "Andrew Stone," writes Bishop Newton, "was a most excellent scholar. At school and at college he distinguished himself by his compositions; and the knowledge, not only of Greek and Latin, but of the Hebrew language, which he had first learned at school, he retained and improved to the last; and was withal a man of grave deportment, of good temper, and of the most consummate prudence and discretion."

The bishop charged Stone with being a Jacobite, while Stone, on his part, accused the bishop, not only with having habitually treated him in a very slighting manner, but with having, on one occasion, laid violent hands upon him with the design of ejecting him from the royal schoolroom. At length, formal charges were drawn up by Lord Harcourt and the bishop against Stone, which charges, without any previous communication with the princess, were laid before the king. Stone, they insisted, had not only repeatedly drunk the health of the pretender in former days, but had also been recently guilty of the glaring impropriety of permitting the heir to the throne to peruse the "Révolutions d'Angleterre," by Père d'Orléans, a work expressly written in defence of the unconstitutional measures of James the Second. In the same sweeping charges of Jacobitism, and of systematic intents to infect the mind of the heir to the throne with arbitrary principles, were included the sub-preceptor Scott, and the princess's secretary and favourite, Cresset. The latter, by the way, was connected by blood with the royal family, being related to the king's maternal grandmother, Eleanor d'Emiers, wife of George William, Duke of Zell, a lady of the French family of D'Olbreuse.

George the Second very properly referred the matter to his constitutional advisers, by whom, after a due investigation, the charges were declared

to be without foundation. Even the timid and suspicious old Duke of Newcastle could see no grounds for consternation. Dissatisfied with this judgment, Lord Harcourt and the bishop again preferred an appeal to the throne for the dismissal of their subordinates, and, on its being rejected, adopted the only alternative that seems to have been left them, namely, that of tendering their resignations, which were unhesitatingly accepted. Some months afterward, the conduct of Stone was made the subject of parliamentary investigation; the Duke of Bedford taking upon himself to move in the House of Lords an address to the throne, for the production of the papers connected with the late investigations. This second attack, however, proved as unsuccessful as the previous one. Only three peers and one prelate accompanied the duke below the bar, and accordingly the motion was negatived without the House coming to a division.

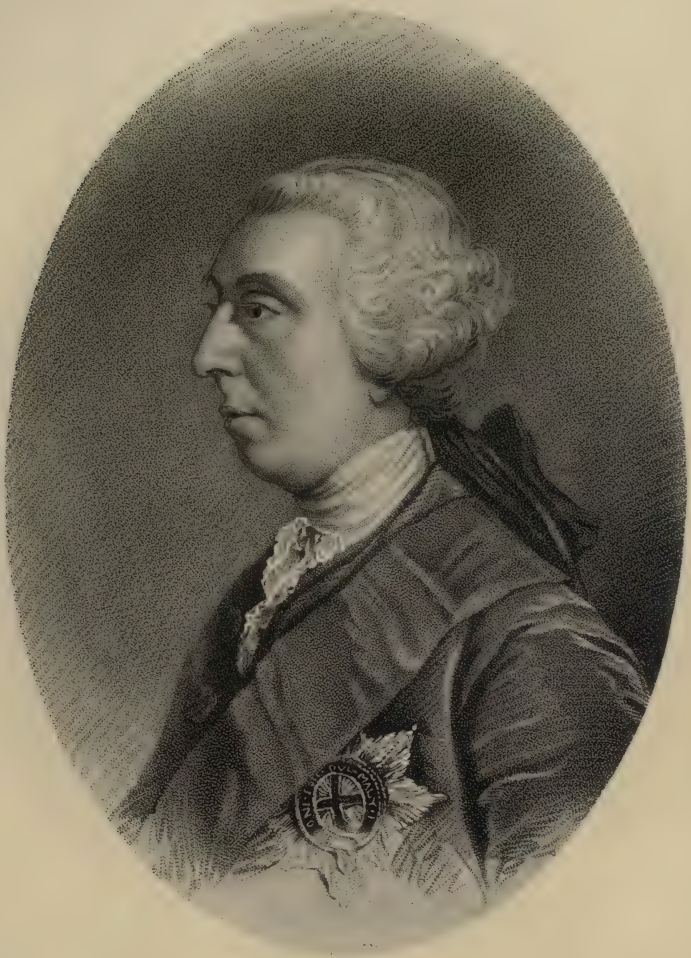
Lord Harcourt was succeeded, as governor of the Prince of Wales, by the Earl of Waldegrave, a man of the world and a votary of pleasure.[1] Many years afterward, we find George the Third speaking in no very flattering terms of either of his former governors. "Lord Waldegrave," he said,

[1] James, second Earl of Waldegrave, K. G., subsequently the husband of the beautiful Maria Walpole, who, after the Earl's death, became Duchess of Gloucester. He died April 28, 1763, at the age of forty-eight.

"was a depraved, worthless man," the other, "well-intentioned, but wholly unfit for the situation in which he was placed." Yet Lord Waldegrave, despite the freedoms which he took with strict morality, was a man of strong sense and of the highest integrity. Enjoying the pleasures and amusements which an ample fortune enabled him to indulge in, and shrinking from incurring the trouble and responsibilities of a thankless office, it had only been at the earnest entreaty of George the Second that he was induced to sacrifice his inclinations and pursuits to what he considered to be the calls of duty. "I am too young," he observed to a friend, "to govern; I am too old to be governed." At the same time that Lord Waldegrave was appointed governor of the prince, Dr. John Thomas, Bishop of Peterborough, and subsequently Bishop of Salisbury, was selected to be his preceptor. The bishop, a gentle and unassuming person, was, whether justly or not, charged by his contemporaries with being too Tory in his principles; but in other respects the selection would seem to have been an unexceptionable one.

James, Earl of Waldegrave.

Photo-etching after the painting by Sir Joshua Reynolds.



CHAPTER II.

Earl of Waldegrave, Governor of the Prince — The Prince's Habits and Disposition — His Slow Progress in Education — His Ignorance of the World — Visit to the Archbishop of Canterbury — Princess of Wales Named Regent — Unpopularity of William, Duke of Cumberland — Influence of the Earl of Bute on the Princess Dowager and on the Prince of Wales — Failure of the King's Proposal to Marry the Prince to a Princess of Wolfenbuttel — Proposed Separate Establishment on Coming of Age — Declined by the Prince — Lord Bute Placed at the Head of the Prince's Household — The Prince's Passion for Hannah Lightfoot, the Fair Quakeress — The Prince's Request for Military Employment Declined by the King.

If the heir to the throne were prejudiced against his new governor, Lord Waldegrave would seem to have been no less prejudiced against his royal charge. In the House of Lords, indeed, we find him "speaking highly of the young prince," yet in his private memoirs he adopts a very different tone. "I found his Royal Highness," he writes, "uncommonly full of princely prejudices, contracted in the nursery, and improved by bed-chamber women and pages of the back-stairs." No less indolent in his habits than docile in his disposition, the future sovereign, at the age of fourteen, would seem to have been perfectly con-

tent with remaining a cipher in the hands of his mother, so long as he was allowed to enjoy his favourite inaction. According to Horace Walpole, when, on one occasion, his sub-preceptor, Scott, remonstrated with him on his want of application, the only excuse which he could make for himself was constitutional idleness. "Idleness, sir!" retorted Scott; "yours is not idleness: your brother Edward is idle; but you must not call being asleep all day being idle."

The prince's indolence and want of scholarship were alike admitted and lamented by his mother. When, on one or two occasions, Dodington ventured to interrogate her in regard to the true character of his future sovereign, the princess freely spoke her mind to him. He was honest, she said; he retained a pious and affectionate regard for his father's memory, and had hitherto given no indication of an immoral tendency. His passion, if he had any, was for his brother Edward. He was childish, said the princess, in his habits, and backward for his years. What his preceptors had taught him, she said, she knew not; but, "to speak freely she feared, not much."

This conversation, it is true, took place as early as October, 1752; and yet nearly three years afterward, when the heir to the throne had attained the age of seventeen, we find his mother repeating similar complaints to Dodington. The prince's education, she said, had caused her great pain;

his "book-learning" she was no judge of, but she supposed it was small or useless, and as to his real character, those about him were as ignorant of it as if they had never known him. On the other hand, she admitted that, if not quick, he was at least intelligent, and that, though his mind had a tendency to seriousness, he was both good-natured and cheerful.

Another point in which the young prince was defective was in a want of knowledge of society and mankind, a drawback regarding which Dodington, a thorough man of the world, was well qualified to advise the princess. It was in vain, however, that he urged upon her the importance of enlarging the circle of her son's acquaintance. The young people of quality, she said, were so ill educated and so vicious that they frightened her. She was sure their bad example would contaminate her children.

Dodington undoubtedly was in the right. "To tell you the honest truth," writes the late King of Hanover, in 1845, "the impression on my mind has ever been that it was a very unfortunate circumstance for my father that he was kept, as it were, aloof, not only from his brothers, but almost from all young men of his own age; and this I saw evident marks of almost daily." Yet, on the other hand, the exclusive system pursued by the princess had at least the happy effect of keeping his early youth unspotted from the world,

and of fixing those strong religious principles which influenced all his actions in after life. Years afterward, his youngest brother, the Duke of Gloucester, whilst sauntering with Hannah More among the Bishop of London's flower-beds at Fulham, reverted with singular gratification to the pure and sinless home of his boyhood. "No boys," he said, "were ever brought up in a greater ignorance of evil than the king and myself. At fourteen years old we retained all our native innocence." It was a period of life, added the duke, which he always recalled with peculiar satisfaction.

Among the few occasions on which, about this period, we find the heir to the throne allowed to mingle with the great world, were those of a launch of one of the royal ships in 1754, and a visit paid by the prince to the Archbishop of Canterbury at Croydon the following year. On the former occasion he was attended by his brothers and by his celebrated uncle, the Duke of Cumberland. "The duke accompanied the princes," writes Mr. John Yorke to Lord Royston, "and showed himself a very dutiful uncle, much to the edification of the multitude, who thought he expressed great fondness toward them. His behaviour to the company was much spoken of; and in particular his engaging Sir Percy Brett,[1] who dined

[1] On the 9th of July, 1745, Capt. Percy Brett, then in command of the *Lion*, 60-gun ship, came in sight of the *Elizabeth*,

with them on board the yacht, to tell the Prince of Wales the story of his engaging the *Elizabeth;* now and then throwing in a circumstance from his own memory with great attention and politeness."

The particulars of the prince's visit to the Archbishop of Canterbury, on which occasion he was accompanied by his mother and her court, are thus related by the archbishop himself in a letter to the lord chancellor, dated September 4, 1755: "They were escorted, if I say right, through the

French man-of-war, carrying sixty-six guns; the latter being convoy to the *Doutelle*, brig, on board of which was the young pretender, on his way to raise his father's standard in the Highlands of Scotland. The *Lion* without hesitation bore down upon them, on which an action took place between her and the *Elizabeth*, which was maintained with great fury and obstinacy for nine hours; when, night setting in, the *Elizabeth*, in an almost disabled state, made good her retreat to Brest. The *Lion* suffered a loss of no fewer than forty-five men killed and one hundred and seven wounded, of whom seven subsequently died of their wounds. The loss of life on board the *Elizabeth* was considerably greater. In the meantime, the young pretender had not only watched the progress of the conflict from the deck of the *Doutelle* with feelings of the most intense anxiety, but is said to have been so ardent in his importunities to induce her captain to take part in the engagement, as to compel the latter to threaten he would order him to his cabin. By the return of the *Elizabeth* to France, the prince had the mortification of being deprived of the greater portion of the arms and ammunition which he had provided for his memorable expedition. It was of Captain Brett's conduct during this most gallant action that Admiral Vernon two years afterward observed in the House of Commons: "Did he not attack a ship of superior force to his own, and with such courage and skill as brought honour to himself, his country, and the British flag?"

court by a company of the Buffs, and the regiment was drawn up in the town with all the officers attending, so that all military honours were paid them. I met the princess at the coach door, and conducted her by her hand up to the apartment. She stayed a little in the drawing-room, and then moved to the coffee and tea in the gallery, with which the table was partly furnished; but a dessert of the best fruit I could get completed the figure, such as it was. She was so gracious as to order us to sit, but nobody had an elbow-chair but the Prince of Wales and the princess. They ate a good breakfast, and I was glad of that. After some little pause her Royal Highness desired to walk around the garden, and we took the opportunity of a gilded moment. She then returned to the house and received the compliments of Colonel Howard and the officers. I reconducted her to her coach in my very best manner."

There was one illustrious member of the royal family who, had he been permitted to associate on intimate terms with the youthful heir to the throne, might, by his sagacious advice, and by his example of strong sense, incorruptible integrity, and unselfish patriotism, have neutralised, to a great extent, the pernicious consequences of the educational system pursued by the princess dowager. That person was William, Duke of Cumberland, the second and only surviving son of George the Second. Unfortunately, however, not

only had the duke been for some years estranged from his sister-in-law, but, more recently, the circumstance of the king having preferred her to be regent of the kingdom, in the event of his own demise during his grandson's minority, had further widened the breach.[1] Moreover, the duke's great unpopularity at this period furnished additional grounds for excluding him from his nephew's society. Men who had formerly lauded to the skies his gallantry at Fontenoy, and who had half worshipped him after his victory at Culloden, now remembered only his loss of the former battle, and the severities which he had practised after the other. When, on some occasion, it was proposed to confer on him the freedom of one of the Companies of the City of London, a facetious alderman suggested that it should be the Butchers' Company. Nurses frightened their infant charges into obedience with the name of the "Butcher Cumberland;" and even statesmen, when they spoke of his revised Mutiny Act, denounced it as a com-

[1] "Next Tuesday the bill for settling the regency will be moved for in the House of Lords; the Princess of Wales to be regent; a council of great officers to be named: the duke to be one, and the king empowered to appoint, or rather add, four more by an instrument under his hand; affairs to be decided, especially peace and war, by the majority of the council. I do not hear how the vacancies are to be filled up. The Parliament, in case of the death of the king, to continue till the prince comes of age (eighteen). It is thought there will be some opposition, as the Princess of Wales's power is limited."

position worthy of Draco. Not only did the mere vulgar believe him capable of acting the part of the wicked uncle in the tale of the "Babes of the Wood," but even in the House of Commons, during the discussions on the Regency Bill, more than one member had made dark allusions to the nephews of John Lackland, and Richard, Duke of Gloucester; at the same time deducing, from their example, the danger of placing at the head of the army so influential and accomplished a soldier as the Duke of Cumberland.

Unhappily, these "base and villainous" insinuations, as Lord Waldegrave justly styles them, were allowed to reach and poison the ears of the royal children. For instance, it is recorded of the heir apparent, that happening, when a child, to pay a visit to his uncle, the duke, in order to amuse him, took down one of the swords which hung in his apartment and drew it from its sheath. To the great distress of the high-minded soldier, the child, imagining that his uncle was about to take away his life, trembled and turned pale. So unmistakable, indeed, was the cause of emotion, that subsequently the duke, with great bitterness, complained to the princess dowager of the shocking impressions which had been instilled into the mind of his nephew.

In the meantime, the Pelhams had not only failed to acquire their hoped-for influence over the mind of the heir to the throne, but there had ap-

peared on the stage another person, whose increasing credit with the future sovereign threatened to become more formidable than even that of the princess dowager. That person was John, Earl of Bute, between whom and the princess it was almost universally believed that a connection of a tender nature existed. "The princess dowager and Lord Bute," writes Lord Chesterfield, "agreed to keep the prince entirely to themselves. None but their immediate and lowest creatures were suffered to approach him. Except at his levees, where none are seen as they are, he saw nobody and none saw him." Ministers on a former occasion had, to their great discomfiture, vainly endeavoured to separate the prince from his mother; and now they had to contend against the further difficulty of removing him from the influence and authority of Lord Bute. At length the king suggested a remedy for the evil, which his ministers seem to have highly approved. "Bigoted, young, and chaste," writes Walpole, "what influence might not a youthful bride obtain over the prince?" These words, as will have been conjectured, refer to a project of marrying the heir to the throne to an eligible princess, and by her agency removing him out of the way of his mother and of Lord Bute. The king, it appears, had, during a visit which he had recently paid to his Hanoverian dominions, been thrown into the society of the two charming daughters of the Duchess of Bruns-

wick-Wolfenbuttel. The eldest — beautiful, sensible, modest, and accomplished — had especially fascinated the old monarch, and accordingly, although the heir apparent was still a mere boy, he had set his heart upon uniting them with as little delay as possible. He only regretted, he gallantly observed, that he was too old to offer to marry her himself. "The Prince of Wales," writes Lord Waldegrave, "was just entering into his eighteenth year, and being of a modest, sober disposition, with a healthy, vigorous constitution, it might reasonably be supposed that a matrimonial companion would be no unacceptable amusement." Such also was the conviction of the well-meaning monarch, and accordingly he invited the fair sisters to pay him a visit in England ; his object, as he said, being to make two young persons happy, and to see his grandson married during his own lifetime.

The princess dowager, however, entertained other views in regard to her son. Not only was she in dread of the influence which a beautiful and accomplished young princess might obtain over his mind, but she also hoped to advance the interests of her family by marrying him to a princess of the house of Saxe-Gotha. Moreover, she was the mother — as she told Dodington — of eight other children, for whom she trusted the king would make some provision before he disposed of her eldest son in marriage ; in addition to which her son might possibly himself become the father of as

numerous a family, and in such case would naturally prefer their interests to those of his brothers and sisters. As yet, she said, the king had not condescended to speak to her on the subject, but should he do so, she should certainly tell him "how ill she took it."

That the princess had instilled into the mind of the heir apparent a strong aversion to a match with a daughter of the house of Brunswick-Wolfenbuttel, there can be little question. "The young princess," writes Lord Waldegrave, "was most cruelly misrepresented. Many even of her perfections were aggravated into faults, his Royal Highness implicitly believing every idle and improbable aspersion, till his prejudice against her amounted to aversion itself." "Her ladyship's boy," writes Walpole, "declares violently against being *bewolfenbuttled* — a word which I do not pretend to understand, as it is not in Mr. Johnson's new dictionary." Under these circumstances, the king, greatly to his annoyance and disappointment, was compelled to relinquish his favourite project. "I remember," writes Lord Waldegrave, "his telling me with great eagerness that had he been twenty years younger, she should never have been refused by a Prince of Wales, but should at once be Queen of England."

Still, the king and his ministers were not without further hope of being able to effect their purpose of separating the prince from his mother.

He was to be of age on the 4th of June, 1756, on the completion of his eighteenth year, an event which would necessitate the formation of a separate establishment for him; and accordingly, as the time approached, Lord Waldegrave was deputed by the king to communicate to the prince his intended removal from Leicester House, as well as the provision which his Majesty proposed to make for his future maintenance, and for the support of his dignity as Prince of Wales. The king, — as the earl told the prince, — being moved by the affection which he had ever conceived for him, had graciously consented to settle on him an income of £40,000 a year; in addition to which the apartments in St. James's Palace, which had been occupied by the late queen, as well as those of the late Prince of Wales in Kensington Palace, had been ordered to be put in a state of preparation for his reception. This announcement, however, afforded but little satisfaction to the young prince. He expressed, indeed, a dutiful and grateful sense of the king's kind intentions toward him; but at the same time dwelt feelingly on the great affliction which a separation from his mother would entail upon both, and expressed an earnest desire that his Majesty might be graciously pleased to reconsider his resolution.

The prince's reply placed the government in an awkward dilemma. To revoke the king's bounty was out of the question; to incur the resentment

of the heir to the throne was, to say the least, inexpedient; and lastly, to have insulted the future sovereign, by having recourse to violent measures, would have covered the ministry with odium. True it is, that the king himself, when Prince of Wales, had supplied a precedent of an heir to the throne having been put under arrest, but, in the present instance, the person proscribed was not, as in his grandfather's case, a rebellious son, but an amiable and unsophisticated young prince, whose only crime was an excess of filial love. Moreover the prince was of age, by act of Parliament, and consequently had a perfect right to consult his own inclinations. Under these circumstances, ministers not only withdrew their opposition, but, in order to ingratiate themselves with their future sovereign and his mother, persuaded the king, though not without much difficulty, to consent to Lord Bute being placed at the head of the prince's new establishment. "Sir," once observed the petulant old monarch to Henry Fox, "it was you made me make that puppy, Bute, groom of the stole." Not less ungracious was the manner in which, unaccompanied by either comment or remark, the king caused the gold key of office to be delivered to the aspiring favourite. The Duke of Grafton, however, as he quietly slipped the bauble into the earl's pocket, whispered to him not to resent the affront; a piece of advice which the other very prudently followed.

In addition to the appointment of Lord Bute as groom of the stole, the Earl of Huntingdon [1] was selected to be master of the horse in the prince's new establishment; the Earls of Pembroke [2] and Euston, and Lord Digby were appointed lords of his bedchamber, and Lord Bathurst [3] treasurer of his household.

Happily, we find those who were admitted to the prince's society speaking in much more favourable terms of him as he advanced toward manhood. For instance, it was just when he had

[1] Francis Hastings, tenth Earl of Huntingdon, celebrated by Akenside in a noble ode:

> "But thee, O progeny of heroes old,
> Thee to severer toils thy fate requires;
> The fate which formed thee in a chosen mould,
> The grateful country of thy sires,
> Thee to sublimer paths demand."
> — *Ode to Francis, Earl of Huntingdon*, 1747.

Lord Huntingdon died, unmarried, 2d October, 1790.

[2] Henry, tenth Earl of Pembroke. On the 13th of the preceding month of March, the young earl had married a beautiful girl of eighteen, — for whom George the Third, at some period of his youth, certainly entertained a passion, — Lady Elizabeth Spencer, daughter of Charles, third Duke of Marlborough. Further mention of her will be found in the course of these pages.

[3] The celebrated Allen, afterward first Earl Bathurst, the chosen friend of the poets and wits of the reigns of Queen Anne and George the First.

> "Who then shall grace or who improve the soil?
> Who plants like Bathurst, or who builds like Boyle?"

Lord Bathurst died 16th September, 1775.

completed his eighteenth year that an accomplished lady, Mrs. Calderwood, of Polton, received the following pleasing account of him from his late subpreceptor, Scott: "I had frequent opportunities," she writes, "of seeing George Scott, and asked many questions about the Prince of Wales. He says he is a lad of very good principles, good-natured, and extremely honest; has no heroic strain, but loves peace, and has no turn for extravagance; modest, and has no tendency to vice, and has as yet very virtuous principles; has the greatest temptation to gallant with the ladies, who lay themselves out in the most shameful manner to draw him in, but to no purpose. He says if he were not what he is they would not mind him. Prince Edward is of a more amorous complexion, but no court is paid to him, because he has so little chance to be king."

Only on one occasion, whether at this or at any other period of the prince's life, is there evidence that his constitutional warmth of temperament, and susceptibility to the fascinations of female loveliness, tempted him to outstep the strict boundaries of continence and chastity. That single exception — it is needless, perhaps, to remark — was his early and notorious passion for the fair Quakeress, Hannah Lightfoot, a passion to which a peculiar interest attaches itself, derived partly from the exalted rank of one of the lovers, partly from their youth and the previous purity of their

lives, but, still more, from the strange mystery which hangs over the fate of a beautiful girl who, whatever may have been her secrets or her sorrows, carried them apparently unshared and uncomplainingly to her grave.

The family of Hannah Lightfoot originally came to London from Yorkshire. Her father, a respectable tradesman, resided at Execution Dock, Wapping in the East, a district sufficiently obscure and remote, one would have thought, to have preserved his daughter from the temptations and perils of a court. Unfortunately, however, she had an uncle, a prosperous linen-draper of the name of Wheeler, who resided in the more fashionable vicinities of Leicester House and St. James's Palace; and as his children were nearly of the same age as herself, it was only natural that she should occasionally become a guest in his house. The house in question — interesting, perhaps, as having been the last in which she was destined to press the pillow of innocence — stood at the southeast corner of Carlton Street, and of what is now called St. Alban's Place; but which was then a continuation of Market Street, which ran, and still runs, southward out of Jermyn Street, St. James's.

It seems to have been early in the year 1754 that the heir to the throne first accidentally encountered, and became enamoured of Hannah Lightfoot. His confidante and agent on the occa-

sion is said to have been his mother's maid of honour, Miss Chudleigh, afterward the too celebrated Duchess of Kingston, a lady whose intimate experience in the intrigues and gallantries of a court enabled her to obtain the ear, and dazzle the imagination, of her intended victim. Unhappily, the fair girl listened to her, and was persuaded to forsake the home of her youth. Her parents advertised for her in the newspapers, but to no purpose. According to the account of one of her relations, her mother died of grief, the result of her daughter's disappearance.

It has been asserted — and in fairness to Hannah Lightfoot the assertion deserves to be repeated — that when she quitted her uncle's roof in Market Street, it was for the purpose of becoming, not the mistress, but the wife of the Prince of Wales. As the Royal Marriage Act was not at this time in existence, the consequences of such a marriage, had it really taken place, might have proved most momentous to the royal family. If, for instance, as has been confidently stated, Hannah Lightfoot became more than once a mother, her children by the Prince of Wales, and not those which Charlotte of Mecklenburgh-Strelitz subsequently bore him, would have been the rightful and legitimate heirs to the crown. Nay, even had she remained childless, the fact of her having been alive at the time of the marriage of George the Third and Queen Charlotte would have rendered that

marriage null and void, and have bastardised its issue.

The first occasion, we believe, on which this very improbable marriage was positively asserted to have taken place was in a scandalous work — afterward suppressed — entitled, "Authentic Records of the Court of England." It is there confidently asserted that the prince was legally married to Hannah Lightfoot in Curzon Street Chapel, May Fair,[1] in the presence of his brother, the Duke of York; that after the death of George the Second, the discovery of the young king's secret spread great consternation amongst his ministers; that subsequently they found means of "disposing" of the fair Quakeress by inducing her to marry a person of the name of Axford; and that from this time her royal lover, notwithstanding his diligent and anxious inquiries, was never able to discover the place of her retreat. Lastly, it is stated that in 1765, at the time when Queen Charlotte was in the family way with the late King William the Fourth, so alarmed was she, on the secret of her consort's former engagement being revealed to her, that she insisted upon the nuptial ceremony being performed anew between them, which was accordingly done at Kew. Most of these statements, it may be

[1] "She eloped in 1754, and was married to Isaac Axford at Keith's Chapel, which my father discovered about three weeks after."

mentioned, are repeated in another scandalous and suppressed work, published in 1832, entitled "A Secret History of the Court of England, from the Accession of George the Third to the Death of George the Fourth;" this latter work being professedly from the pen of Lady Anne Hamilton, lady of the bedchamber to Caroline, Princess of Wales.[1] These two unworthy literary productions, though evidently composed by persons not ill informed in the secret history of the court, are nevertheless so unmistakably distorted, either by invention or exaggeration, that at first our impulse is to dismiss them as utterly worthless. Singularly enough, however, we find more than one of the statements which are contained in the "Authentic Records" and in the "Secret History" endorsed by the respectable authority of a no less well-informed person than William Beckford, the author of "Vathek."[2] His account, it is true, differs in its details from the others; but, on the other hand, the discrepancies are thereby rendered confirmatory rather than otherwise, as apparently showing that the several statements were derived from persons who had no communication with each other. For instance, instead of Curzon Street Chapel being specified as the scene of the marriage between the prince

[1] Anne, eldest daughter of Archibald, Duke of Hamilton, was born March 16, 1766, and died October 10, 1846.

[2] "Conversations with the late Mr. Beckford."

and Hannah Lightfoot, the ceremony, according to Beckford, was performed at Kew in the presence of Mr. Pitt [1] and of one Ann Taylor. Here, curiously enough, we have Mr. Pitt brought forward as an actor in the drama, while in the "Authentic Records" he is introduced as playing an equally prominent part in assisting the young king to discover the retreat of his mistress. Again, according to the "Secret History," the clergyman who married Hannah Lightfoot to the Prince of Wales was Doctor Wilmot, while, according to Beckford's version, this was the person who solemnised the second marriage between the king and queen.[2] Lastly, both by Beckford and

[1] Afterward Earl of Chatham. In 1754, the year in which George the Third is said to have formed his connection with Hannah Lightfoot, Mr. Pitt was on intimate terms at Leicester House.

[2] The Reverend James Wilmot, D. D., Fellow of Trinity College, Oxford, Rector of Barton-on-the-Heath, and Aulcester, Warwickshire. "He was a good scholar," said Beckford, "a sincere Whig, and most intimate friend of Lord Chatham. He had opportunities of being fully acquainted with everything." According to Doctor Wilmot's niece and biographer, "he lived in habits of friendship and confidence with some of the most distinguished characters of the age, among whom were Mr. Grenville, Lords Northington, Shelburne, and Sackville, together with the celebrated Mr. Wilkes, Mr. Thurlow, and Mr. Dunning. The late Bishop of Worcester, Lords Plymouth, Archer, Sondes, Bathurst, Grosvenor, Craven, and Abingdon, were on terms of intimacy with him, more particularly the three first-named noblemen." His biographer also mentions as among her uncle's intimate friends the Princess Amelia, the king's

in the "Secret History," Doctor Wilmot is spoken of as a likely person to have written the letters of Junius.[1]

Of the amount of credit which ought to be placed in these different statements the reader must be left to judge for himself. For our own part, we are inclined to attach some slight importance to another irregular version of the story, — the version, by the by, which the nearest relatives of Hannah Lightfoot regarded as the truth, — namely, that when she quitted her uncle's roof it was for the purpose of being married, not to

brothers, the Dukes of York and Gloucester, Lord Chatham, Lord North, Burke, and other eminent persons.

[1] A fourth authority for the supposition that a marriage was solemnised between George the Third and Hannah Lightfoot is to be found in a handsomely printed pamphlet, entitled "An Historical Fragment Relative to Her Late Majesty, Queen Caroline," printed for Hunt, London, 1824, pp. 44, 45. "The queen (Caroline) at this time laboured under a very curious and, to me, unaccountable species of delusion. She fancied herself neither a wife nor a queen. She believed his present Majesty (George the Fourth) to have been actually married to Mrs. Fitzherbert; and she as fully believed that his late Majesty, George the Third, was married to Miss Hannah Lightfoot, the beautiful Quakeress, — previous to his marriage with Queen Charlotte, under the colour of an evening's entertainment after the death of Miss Lightfoot, — and as that lady did not die till after the births of the present king and his Royal Highness the Duke of York, her Majesty really considered the present Duke of Clarence the true heir to the throne. How the queen," adds the writer, "came to entertain such romantic suppositions as these it is not for me to know; but that she did entertain them I know well."

the heir to the throne, but to one who had been bribed to lend her his name, and to give her his hand at the altar on the condition that he was never to claim her as his wife. Presuming, for the sake of argument, that this unholy marriage really took place, the projectors of it had doubtless in view the double object of preventing the infatuated young prince from marrying Hannah Lightfoot himself, and also of precluding the possibility of their issue hereafter preferring any inconvenient claims to legitimacy. The name of the individual who is presumed to have led Hannah Lightfoot to the altar is, we believe, correctly stated in the "Authentic Memoirs." It was Axford. According to the account of a distant connection of Hannah Lightfoot who was living in the year 1821, "the general belief of her friends was that she was taken into keeping by Prince George directly after her marriage to Axford, but never lived with him."[1] At Knowle

[1] A correspondent writes in April, 1856: "Mrs. Philipps (a cousin of Hannah Lightfoot) informs me by letter, dated 27th February last, that her late father, Henry Wheeler, Esq., of Surrey Square, was the last of the family who saw her, *on her going to Keith's Chapel to be married to a person of the name of Axford*, a person the family knew nothing of. *He* never saw her, or heard of her, after the marriage took place. Every inquiry was made, but no satisfactory information was ever obtained respecting her." The solemnisation of marriage in Curzon Street Chapel, May Fair, by the notorious Alexander Keith, was put an end to by the "Marriage Act" in 1753. The last occasion on which he was permitted to exercise his mis-

Park, in Kent, is an interesting portrait of Hannah Lightfoot, painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds. The catalogue describes it as the portrait of Mrs. Axford.

One other trifling incident may be recorded as tending to corroborate the presumption that Hannah Lightfoot was the wedded wife of Axford. As soon, it is stated, as the ceremony was performed, she was conducted to the house of "one Perryn of Knightsbridge," where she received the visits of her royal lover; the important feature of the anecdote being that, within the present century, a family of this uncommon name was discovered to be still residing in the district. Its members carried on the business of dressmaking in Exeter Street.[1]

Not only has it been asserted that Hannah Lightfoot bore children to her royal lover, but one or two respectable families have been named as having sprung from their intercourse. Instead,

chievous vocation with impunity was on the 24th of March, 1753, on which day he joined in wedlock nearly one hundred couples; the number married in the Fleet on the same day being no fewer than two hundred and seventeen. Presuming, therefore, that George the Third was really married to Hannah Lightfoot at "Keith's Chapel," the ceremony — inasmuch as he was born on the 4th of June, 1738 — must have taken place before he had completed his fifteenth year.

[1] In 1821 Axford's family were still well known as respectable tradespeople, carrying on the business of grocers on Ludgate Hill. Isaac Axford himself died about the year 1816, in his eighty-sixth year.

however, of these surmises, as far as we are aware, having been satisfactorily substantiated, the real fact would seem to be, that from the time of Hannah Lightfoot quitting her uncle's roof in Market Street to the hour of her death, little or nothing authentic is known concerning her. She lived, it is said, in the most secluded manner, in a villa in the neighbourhood of the Hackney Road, then a sequestered suburb of the metropolis.[1] There, too, in all probability, she died.

It was at this time that the threatened landing on the shores of Great Britain of a French army raised to an enthusiastic height the patriotism and loyalty of the people. "All the country squires," writes Walpole to Sir Horace Mann, "are in regimentals; a pedestal is making for little Lord Montfort that he may be placed at the head of the Cambridgeshire militia." Among those who in this season of national peril applied the most eagerly for military employment was the young Prince of Wales. It was a crisis, he wrote to the king, when every zealous subject was pressing forward with offers of service in defence of his king and country, and consequently he, as Prince of Wales, would naturally feel uneasy

[1] "A retreat was provided for Hannah in one of those large houses surrounded with a high wall and garden, in the district of Cat-and-Mutton Fields, on the east side of Hackney Road, leading from Mile End Road, where she lived, and, it is said, died."

should he be forced to remain in a state of inactivity. He reminded his grandfather how he himself in his youth had sought and achieved a soldier's reputation on the field of battle. The same blood, he said, flowed in the veins of both, and could his Majesty be surprised if it inspired him with corresponding sentiments? It was true, he added, that he was young and inexperienced, but he trusted that personal courage, as well as the example which he hoped to set of the highest in rank sharing the common peril, would compensate for other deficiencies.

Considering how thorough a soldier George the Second was by nature, one might have imagined that an appeal of this kind would have warmed his heart toward his heir and destined successor. One might have imagined that he would have recalled to mind how he himself, in the flower of life, when serving under the great Marlborough, had led his famous cavalry charge at the battle of Oudenarde; how, in middle age, he had challenged his brother monarch, Frederick William of Prussia, to meet him in single combat on the plains of Hildesheim; how, at a still later date, bidding his men fire for the honour of England, he had dashed, with his gallant son, the Duke of Cumberland, by his side, into the thickest of the fight at the battle of Dettingen,[1] and that, under these circumstances, he

[1] Respecting the gallantry displayed by George II. at the battle of Dettingen, see, in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for July, 1743,

would have encouraged the military aspirations of his youthful grandson. But whatever may have been his reasons, such was not the case. When, a short time after the old king had received the prince's letter, the Duke of Newcastle entered the royal closet, his Majesty placed the document in his hands, and, having made him read it twice over, inquired of him what kind of answer he would recommend him to return. The prince, he said, was evidently intent upon elevating himself: *monter un pas* was his expression. "I told his Majesty," writes the duke, "that I hoped he would return a kind answer; that the letter was very respectful and submissive." Whether this friendly suggestion was heeded, or, indeed, whether the prince's letter was ever answered at all, appears to be a matter of uncertainty. The real fact would seem to have been that the jealous monarch either misconstrued, or pretended to misconstrue, the intention of his grandson's application. "Though the command-in-chief," observes the Duke of Newcastle, "was not named, or anything like it, the king took it to mean that; and, indeed, that did seem to be the purport of the letter."

Advanced as George the Second was in years, he had apparently reserved, in the event of foreign invasion, the foremost post of honour and peril for

two letters, the one from a general officer in the British army, and the other from an officer of the name of Kendal, who fought in Lord Ashburnham's troop.

himself. "The king's tents and equipage," writes Gray to Warton, on the 21st of July, "are ordered to be ready at an hour's warning."[1]

[1] With the exception of James the First, George the Third would seem to have been the first adult King of England since the Norman Conquest, or possibly since the Heptarchy, who had not on some occasion risked his life in battle. The further fact is also remarkable, that George the Second was the first King of England since the Conquest who reached the age of seventy. Since his death two other English sovereigns, George the Third and William the Fourth, have attained that age.

CHAPTER III.

Sudden Death of George II. — Accession of the Prince of Wales as George III. — Condition of Public Affairs — The King's First Speech in Council, Supposed to be Inspired by Lord Bute — Chagrin of Mr. Pitt and the Duke of Newcastle — No Change in the Ministry — Proclamation against "Vice, Profanity, and Immorality" — Attention of George III. to the Last Wishes of His Grandfather — Funeral of George II. — Friendly Bearing of the King to the Duke of Cumberland and Other Members of the Royal Family — Testimonies to the Good Disposition and Good Sense of the King — A Royal Chaplain Rebuked — Lord Bute's Share in Preparing the King's First Speech to Parliament — Career and Character of Bute — Bute's Influence at Court Renders the King and His Mother Unpopular.

GEORGE THE SECOND expired at Kensington Palace on the 25th of October, 1760, in the seventy-seventh year of his age. His death was, for his own sake, in many respects a desirable one. Not only had he been fortunate enough to recover the popularity which he had lost by the blunders and disasters that had clouded the morning of his reign, but, owing mainly to the glorious military successes which had emblazoned its setting, he had latterly become beloved and esteemed by his people. Moreover, during the last two years his sense of hearing, as well as his eyesight, had be-

come more and more impaired. It seemed to him, he said, as though every one's face was covered with black crape. From the afflictions, therefore, of total deafness and blindness he was mercifully preserved. He was spared, too, the misery of a long illness, and expired, apparently, without a pang.

On the night preceding his death, the aged king had retired to bed to all appearance in perfect health, and on the following morning rose at his usual hour of six, made an inquiry respecting the wind, and expressed his intention of walking in the gardens. Having drunk his chocolate, he retired to a small apartment adjoining his bedchamber, from which his German *valet de chambre* presently heard a deep sigh or groan proceeding, followed by a further sound as if something heavy had fallen within. He rushed into the room, and found his royal master extended on the floor with the blood trickling from his forehead. The right ventricle of the king's heart had burst, and in falling he had struck his forehead against a bureau. With a single gasp he expired. Lady Yarmouth was immediately sent for; but the time had arrived when the presence of a mistress was more than ever indecorous, and accordingly she desired that the king's daughter, the Princess Amelia, should be summoned to take her place in the chamber of death. The scene which followed the entrance of the princess into the apartment

is described as having been a very painful one. The royal attendants had neglected to close the eyes of the dead. The princess was both deaf and near-sighted. Some imaginary sound or other had led her to fancy that her father spoke to her, and accordingly she bent her face close to his, in hopes to catch his words. Her feelings may be more easily imagined than described when she discovered that he was a corpse. "The king is dead," writes Gray, the poet, to the Rev. J. Brown: "he rose this morning about six, — his usual early hour, — in perfect health, and had his chocolate between seven and eight. An unaccountable noise was heard in his chamber. They ran in and found him lying on the floor. He was directly bled, and a few drops came from him, but he instantly expired."

At the period of George the Third's accession to the crown of England he was in his twenty-third year. Seldom had a sovereign of this country ever ascended the throne under more advantageous circumstances. Instead of being an alien in the land, — ignorant of its laws, and almost of its language, as his father and grandfather had been before him, — he had happily first seen the light on British soil, and had been nurtured and educated among its people. His predecessors, preferring the interests of their German Electorate to those of the great country over which they had been invited to rule,

had not only rendered themselves unpopular with the English people, but had with difficulty succeeded in defending their throne against the influence and machinations of the house of Stuart. George the Third, on the contrary, was encumbered neither by the disadvantages of foreign birth, nor scarcely by those of a disputed succession. His only formidable rival for the throne, Charles Stuart, the darling of Scottish song, had sunk into an ignominious voluptuary, contenting himself with shooting wolves by day in the forest of Ardennes, and indulging in disreputable orgies at night. The once powerful Jacobite party in England, who formerly, under any favourable circumstances, would readily and chivalrously have ventured their lives and fortunes in his cause, had not only become disgusted with his selfishness and sensuality, but were prepared at the first propitious moment to flock to St. James's and salute the rising sun. Other advantages befriended George the Third on his accession. Great Britain, instead of groaning under the calamities, domestic as well as foreign, which had saddened the reigns of his immediate predecessors, had been restored by the genius of the illustrious Pitt to the highest state of prosperity and greatness. Under his auspices her commerce had been rendered prosperous beyond all precedent; colony had been added to colony; while victory, gained after victory, had once more

occasioned the name of an Englishman to be as much respected and dreaded over the world as had been the case in the days of Cromwell and Queen Anne.

The circumstances under which the young prince received the first intelligence of his accession to the throne were related by himself, many years afterward, to George Rose. He was riding, he said, from Kew Palace to London, for the purpose of giving some orders respecting an organ which was being constructed for him, when, near Kew Bridge, he was accosted by a man on horseback, who presented him with "a piece of very coarse white-brown paper" containing no other writing than the name of "Schrieder," a German *valet de chambre* of the late king. This was sufficient, however, to obtain credence for the messenger, who accordingly informed him that his Majesty had been suddenly seized by an attack of illness which threatened to be fatal. The prince promptly decided how he ought to act. Having enjoined the messenger to keep the intelligence to himself and to ride quietly forward, he intimated to his attendants that his horse had become lame, and on this pretext rode back to Kew. Later in the day he received an express from his aunt, the Princess Amelia, announcing the death of the king, on which he determined to repair at once to London. On the road, he said, he met a coach and six, which by the blue and silver liveries of

the servants he knew to belong to Mr. Pitt. The great statesman had come from London to communicate to him in form the intelligence of his accession to the throne, and now followed him back to the metropolis. The next day, the new king was proclaimed with the usual solemnities; first of all opposite his late residence, Saville House, in Leicester Square, and afterward at Charing Cross, at Temple Bar, in Cheapside, and at the Royal Exchange.

In the meantime, in order to avoid unnecessary parade, as well as to escape the acclamations of the populace, the new king determined on meeting the Privy Council at Carlton House, the occasional residence of the princess dowager. On his arrival there he dismissed the guards on duty, desiring them to attend the dead body of his grandfather. After a brief interview with the first minister of the crown,— the Duke of Newcastle, — the king entered the council-chamber, where he delivered his first speech, which even his defamer, Horace Walpole, admits to have been characterised by dignity and propriety. There was, however, one circumstance connected with it which, even to the least far-sighted of the lords composing the great Whig party, which had so long governed England, must have appeared portentous of peril. The ministers had the mortification of listening to a speech which, instead of being of their own composition, was evidently the work of the sovereign

and of Lord Bute. At the time when it was read to them, there were present in the royal closet — besides the king — the Duke of Newcastle, the Earl of Holderness, and Mr. Pitt. "The king," writes the duke, "ordered me to read it, which I did very clearly and distinctly." At its conclusion, the king, as if he desired to preclude all discussion and remonstrance, inquired, "Is there anything wrong in point of form?" "We all bowed," writes the duke, "and went out of the closet." At that moment Mr. Pitt's countenance is said to have betrayed an expression of mingled indignation and astonishment, singularly ominous of that strong personal dislike which, in common with most of his Whig colleagues, he apparently ever afterward entertained toward George the Third. Bitter, indeed, must have been the feelings of that great man when — in words which had evidently been carefully considered — he heard denounced as an "expensive war" that glorious contest which, under his auspices, had alike raised Great Britain to a height of fame and prosperity hitherto unexampled in her annals, and her sovereign to be the most powerful potentate in Europe — "words," writes the Duke of Newcastle, "which, without any previous communication with Mr. Pitt, had been actually 'projected, executed, and entered on the Council books!'" Scarcely able to believe the evidence of his own ears, Pitt inquired of the Duke of Newcastle whether he had heard aright.

He had not heard, he said, the speech distinctly, and especially the last words. "I then," writes the duke, "repeated it to him from memory."[1]

But the feelings of the Duke of Newcastle — the most jealous of statesmen, as well as one of the most timid of men — must have been more painful even than those of his illustrious colleague. Pitt trembled for his country. Newcastle trembled for himself. Already some disagreeable forebodings had entered into the duke's mind. Within three or four hours after the death of George the Second, he had received a message commanding his attendance at Carlton House, where, on his arrival, he was ushered into the presence of Lord Bute. The duke was the first person, said the earl, to whom the king proposed to grant a private interview, his Majesty being desirous to confer with him alone before he met his council. The words of the sovereign, on the duke first entering the royal closet, sounded sufficiently satisfactory. "His Majesty," writes the duke to Lord Hardwicke, "informed me that he had always had a very good opinion of me, and that he knew my constant zeal for his family and my duty to his grandfather, which he thought would be pledges of my zeal for him."

[1] According to the Duke of Newcastle, the words "projected, executed, and entered on the Council books," which gave so much offence to Mr. Pitt, were a "bloody war." The author, however, has examined the contemporary MS. entry of the king's speech in the books of the Privy Council office, in which he finds the words to be "an expensive, but just and necessary war."

These kind expressions, however, were followed by others far less palatable. "My Lord Bute," said the king, "is your good friend; he will tell you my thoughts." So remarkable an expression could scarcely have failed to startle the jealous statesman. He was, in fact, thunderstruck. "God knows," he writes to Lord Hardwicke, "and my friends know, the distress I am in. Nobody's advice equals yours with me, and my fate, or at least my resolution, must be taken before to-morrow evening; therefore, I most ardently beseech your lordship to be in town so as to dine with me to-morrow." Again, he adds: "My opinion is they will give me good words, and that they conclude, as is true, that I shall willingly go out."

Nevertheless, for the present, the duke had no great occasion to tremble for his place. For instance, when, four days after the death of George the Second, George, Lord Lyttelton, the poet and historian, arrived in London, he found a happy lull in the world of politics, without apparently a single cloud gathering in the distance. On the 30th of October he kissed the young king's hand, and on the following day thus represents the state of affairs in a letter to the accomplished Mrs. Montagu: "It is with great pleasure I can assure you that all parties unite in the strongest expressions of zeal and affection for our young king, and approbation of his behaviour since his accession. He has shown the most obliging kind-

ness to all the royal family, and done everything that was necessary to give his government quiet and unanimity in this difficult crisis. I have been told of some great and extraordinary marks of royal virtues in his nature, and royal wisdom in his mind, by those who do not flatter. There will be no changes in the ministry, and I believe few at court. The Duke of Newcastle hesitated some time whether he should undertake his arduous office in a new reign, but he has yielded at last to the earnest desire of the king himself, of the Duke of Cumberland, and of the heads of all parties and factions, even those who formerly were most hostile to him. His friend and mine, my Lord Hardwicke, has been most graciously talked to by the king in two or three audiences, and will, I doubt not, continue in the Cabinet Council with the weight and influence he ought to have there."

On the last day of the month, the young king gladdened the hearts of the religious and sober portion of his subjects, by issuing a proclamation for the encouragement of piety and virtue, and for the prevention and punishment of "vice, profaneness, and immorality."

For the memory of his grandfather the young king manifested a respect which was the more meritorious on account of the little sympathy which had formerly existed between them. The orders which we have seen him giving to his

guards to do honour to the dead, instead of to the living, were followed by the dismissal of Mr. Clavering, one of the grooms of the bedchamber, for refusing to sit up at night with the royal corpse. Instead of imitating the example of the late king, who, under similar circumstances, had destroyed his father's will, the new monarch carefully enforced every wish and injunction of the deceased. It had been one of the exhortations of George the Second to his medical attendants, that his body after his death should be embalmed with as little delay as possible, and with double the usual quantity of perfumes. He had further desired that one of the sides of the late queen's coffin, which had purposely been left unscrewed at the time of her funeral, should be removed, and that his body, with a corresponding side of his own coffin also removed, should be placed side by side with hers, in order that their dust might mingle together. How piously this affectionate injunction was carried into effect was subsequently shown in the year 1837, on the occasion of the opening of the royal vault in Henry the Seventh's chapel for the purpose of removing to Windsor the body of a still-born infant of the late King of Hanover. To Dean Milman, then one of the prebendaries of Westminster, fell the duty of superintending the execution of the secretary of state's warrant, which empowered the dean and chapter to open the vault. "In the

middle of the vault, toward the further end," writes Doctor Milman, "stood the large stone sarcophagus, and against the wall are still standing the two sides of the coffins which were withdrawn. I saw and examined them closely, and have no doubt of the fact. The vault contains only the family of George the Second." Let us further mention that the sum of six thousand pounds, in bank-notes, having been found in the late king's private cabinet, — attached to which was a written request from him that they might be delivered to his late mistress, Lady Yarmouth, — the new monarch not only complied with the requisition, but added to it the further sum of two thousand guineas, which had been discovered in another drawer of the cabinet.[1]

Of the funeral of the late king, which took place on the 11th of November, Horace Walpole, who walked in the procession, has bequeathed us a highly graphic description. "The prince's chamber, hung with purple and a quantity of silver lamps — " he writes, "the coffin under a

[1] "The king," writes Lord Lyttelton to Mrs. Montagu, "has opened his grandfather's will in presence of all the royal family; and it is said that the Duke of Cumberland is heir to the much greater part of what his Majesty had to dispose of, but that is much less than was supposed." And again Lord Lyttelton writes: "He (George the Second) was able to leave no more to his three surviving children than thirty thousand pounds in equal proportions, and I have heard that the duke has given up his to his sisters. Princess Emily is come to live in my brother's house, like a private woman."

canopy of purple velvet, and six vast chandeliers of silver on high stands — had a very good effect. The ambassador from Tripoli and his son were carried to see that chamber. The procession through a line of foot-guards, every seventh man bearing a torch — the horse-guards lining the outside, their officers, with drawn sabres and crape sashes, on horseback — the drums muffled — the fifes, bells tolling, and minute-guns — all this was very solemn. But the charm was the entrance of the abbey, where we were received by the dean and chapter in rich robes, the choir and almsmen bearing torches; the whole abbey so illuminated that one saw it to greater advantage than by day; the tombs, long aisles, and fretted roof all appearing distinctly and with the happiest *chiaro scuro.*

"The real serious part," continues Walpole, "was the figure of the Duke of Cumberland, heightened by a thousand melancholy circumstances. He had a dark brown adonis, and a cloak of black cloth with a train of five yards. Attending the funeral of a father could not be pleasant; his leg extremely bad, yet forced to stand upon it near two hours; his face bloated and distorted with his late paralytic stroke, which has affected, too, one of his eyes; and placed over the mouth of the vault, into which in all probability he must himself so soon descend: think how unpleasant a situation! He bore it all with a firm and un-

affected countenance. This grave scene was fully contrasted by the burlesque Duke of Newcastle. He fell into a fit of crying the moment he came into the chapel, and flung himself back in a stall, the archbishop hovering over him with a smelling-bottle; but in two minutes his curiosity got the better of his hypocrisy, and he ran about the chapel with his glass to spy who was or was not there, spying with one hand, and mopping his eyes with the other. Then returned the fear of catching cold; and the Duke of Cumberland, who was sinking with heat, felt himself weighed down, and turning around, found it was the Duke of Newcastle standing upon his train to avoid the chill of the marble. It was very theatric to look down into the vault, where the coffin lay attended by mourners with lights."

Another amiable trait, which, immediately after the accession of the young king, distinguished his behaviour, was the marked kindness and delicate consideration with which — notwithstanding their long estrangement from one another — he conducted himself toward his uncle, the Duke of Cumberland. He not only did all in his power to spare him any mortification, to which he was liable from having ceased to be the first prince of the blood, but, in a private interview to which he invited him, expressed an earnest hope that hereafter they might associate on the best of terms. He was well aware, said the king, that hitherto una-

nimity had not been a characteristic of the royal family, but he intended to introduce a new system into it, and at least it should not be his fault if future discords should take place.

Many are the tributes which, at this time, we find the king's contemporaries paying to his good disposition and good sense. Among those who had known him earliest and best was the charming Mary, Lady Hervey, whose praise or blame are alike of moment. Whatever ill effects might have been produced by his faulty education, she at least knew him to be at heart amiable, straightforward, unaffected, and honest. Accordingly, on the 30th of October, five days after the accession of the "charming young king," as Walpole styles him, she writes: "Every one, I think, seems to be pleased with the noble behaviour of our young king, and, indeed, so much unaffected good nature and propriety appears in all he does or says, that it cannot but endear him to all; but whether anything can long endear a king, or an angel, in this strange, factious country, I cannot tell. I have the best opinion imaginable of him; not from anything he does or says just now, but because I have a moral certainty that he was in his nursery the honestest, true, good-natured child that ever lived, and you know my old maxim, that qualities never change. What the child was, the man most certainly is, in spite of temporary appearances." "He has many amiable and virtuous qualities," writes

General Yorke to Sir Andrew Mitchell, "is rather timid, but since his accession, I am told, he represents well, and spoke his speech with great grace and dignity. He received all his grandfather's servants with great goodness, and pressed them to continue in his service, which they consented to, though some of them, particularly the Duke of Newcastle, was inclined to retire."

Even the most fastidious persons, as well as those who were the most likely to be prejudiced against him, hastened to do justice to the dignity, grace, and propriety which distinguished the conduct and deportment of the youthful monarch. Among the first to kiss his hands was Horace Walpole, who, to use his own expression, was "not apt to be enamoured with royalty." The king, he says, is "good and amiable in everything, having no view but that of contenting all the world." To Sir Horace Mann, Walpole also writes, on the 1st of November, 1760: "His person is tall and full of dignity, his countenance florid and good-natured, his manner graceful and obliging. He expresses no warmth or resentment against anybody, at most, coldness. To the Duke of Cumberland he has shown even a delicacy of attention." Again, twelve days afterward, Walpole writes to the same correspondent: "For the king himself, he seems all good nature and wishing to satisfy everybody. All his speeches are obliging. I saw him yesterday, and was surprised to find the levee-room had

lost so entirely the air of a lion's den. The sovereign does not stand in one spot with his eyes fixed royally on the ground, and dropping bits of German news. He walks about and speaks freely to everybody. I saw him afterward on the throne, where he is graceful and genteel, sits with dignity, and reads his answer to addresses well." The king's voice and delivery, unless when he happened to be excited, are described by others as having been remarkably pleasing. "The king reads admirably," writes Madame D'Arblay; "with ease, feeling, and force. His voice is particularly full and fine. I was very much surprised at its effect."

Among other persons who have borne pleasing testimony to the virtues of the young king is the celebrated Mrs. Montagu. "There is a decency and dignity in his character," she writes to Mrs. Carter, "that could not be expected at his years; mildness and firmness mixed; religious sentiments, and a moral conduct unblemished; application to business; affability to every one; no bias to any particular party or faction; sound and serious good sense in conversation; and an elevation of thought and tenderness of sentiment. There hardly passes a day in which one does not hear of something he has said, or done, which raises one's opinion of his understanding and heart." About this time one of his chaplains, Doctor Wilson, having ventured to eulogise him from the pulpit while he was present in the

chapel royal, the king at once took steps to prevent a recurrence of such mistimed flatteries. He desired, he said, that his chaplains might be informed that he went to church to hear the praises of God, and not his own. "Thank Heaven!" writes Mrs. Montagu, "that our king is not like his brother of Prussia, a hero, a wit, and a freethinker, for in the disposition of the present times we should soon have seen the whole nation roaring blasphemy, firing cannon, and jesting away all that is serious, good, and great. But religious as this young monarch is, we have reason to hope God will protect him from the dangers of his situation, and make him the means of bringing back that sense of religion and virtue which has been wearing off for some generations."

A violent fall from his horse, which befell the king a few weeks after his accession, appears to have excited considerable consternation in the public mind. On recovering himself, his first considerations were for his mother, to whom, in order to prevent her being alarmed by exaggerated reports of what had happened, he immediately wrote an account of the accident. It was with difficulty that his physicians could induce him to be bled, and to less purpose that they endeavoured to dissuade him from attending the theatre in the evening. He had promised, he said, to appear in public at the performances, and he was resolved not to disappoint his subjects. On a previous

occasion, when he witnessed the representation of "Richard the Third," at Drury Lane, we find the theatre completely filled before three o'clock.

On the 18th of November the young monarch delivered his first speech in Parliament. Never, perhaps, on any similar occasion, had the House of Lords contained a more brilliant company; seldom had St. James's Park and the streets leading to Westminster been more crowded; never, perhaps, had a royal speech from the throne been hailed with more universal approbation.[1] The ministers, indeed, listened to it with feelings of jealousy and alarm, it being only too evident to them that Lord Bute had had a hand in its preparation. True it is, that the speech was the composition of the Earl of Hardwicke, who had forwarded it in due official course to the Duke of Newcastle for the king's consideration and approval, but, on the other hand, on its being returned by the king to the duke, it was found to contain certain additional "words" which could not fail to give great dissatisfaction to the Cabinet — "words," writes Lord Bute to the prime minister, "which his Majesty will have inserted, and

[1] Her Royal Highness, the Princess of Wales, with great part of the royal family, were in the Octagon Room at Carlton House, which looks into the Park, to see his Majesty. The Countess of Harrington's favourite room in the Park was also filled with ladies, and all the garden walls lined with the genteelest company, as well as all the windows, quite to the House of Peers.

has for that purpose wrote out himself." Those memorable words were as follow: "Born and educated in this country, I glory in the name of Briton; and the peculiar happiness of my life will ever consist in promoting the welfare of a people, whose loyalty and warm affection to me I consider the greatest and most permanent security of my throne." There is one word in this passage which was curiously significant. The king, it is said, had originally written the word "Englishman," but Bute had induced him to alter it to "Briton." The Duke of Newcastle writes to Lord Hardwicke: "There must be some notice taken of these royal words, both in the Motion and Address. I suppose you will think Briton remarkable. It denotes the author to all the world."

To Lord Hardwicke these "royal words" — inasmuch as they were supposed to reflect on the foreign birth and foreign prejudices of his late royal master — are said to have been no less offensive than they were to the Duke of Newcastle, as being indicative of secret and Scottish influence behind the throne. They were, however, as Lord Hardwicke writes to his son, "by command," and he felt it was best, therefore, to allow them to stand without remonstrance. Newcastle, on the other hand, was furious. Accustomed as he had so long been to dictate the speeches and to direct the political conduct of his sovereign, his pride no less than his fears were aroused.

To Lord Hardwicke he writes, on returning the speech to him: "I make no observation, but that this method of proceeding cannot last, though we must now, I suppose, submit." Unquestionably, nothing but the king's youth and inexperience could in any degree excuse so unconstitutional an exercise of the royal prerogative.

Unhappily, George the Third retained but for a brief period the favour of his subjects. The great misfortune of his public life — the source, in fact, of most of his political errors and of his consequent unpopularity — was unquestionably the bigoted and exclusive system under which he had been educated. By nature unsuspicious and affectionate, diffident in regard to his own abilities, conscious of his own inexperience in public affairs, entertaining a pious and dutiful reverence for his only surviving parent, and accustomed from childhood to cherish very exaggerated notions of Lord Bute's administrative talents, it was, perhaps, only natural that he should have been too easily content to become a cipher in the hands of others. "Like a new sultan," writes Lord Chesterfield, "he was dragged out of the seraglio by the princess and Lord Bute, and placed upon the throne." The systematic seclusion in which he had been brought up, and which after his accession he preferred to what is called society, produced the double and unfortunate effect of keeping his subjects in ignorance of his many estimable qualities,

and of entailing on him, for a time, an amount of unpopularity which, though frequently unmerited, was not the less prejudicial to his interests. His only associates in youth had been the creatures of his mother and Lord Bute. All his political notions had been derived from the same exceptionable source. "Secluded from the world," writes Junius, "and attached from his infancy to one set of persons, and one set of ideas, he can neither open his heart to new connections nor his mind to better information."

John, third Earl of Bute, was the son of James, the second earl, by Lady Anne Campbell, daughter of Archibald, first Duke of Argyle. A mere accident — a shower of rain, which, by interrupting a cricket-match at Clifden, had led to his services being required to make up a rubber of whist for the amusement of Frederick, Prince of Wales — had been the occasion of his becoming a favourite at Leicester House and Kew. Cold and unconciliating in his manners, proud and sensitive in his nature, and solemn and sententious in his discourse, we find ourselves at a loss to conceive by what means, or by what arts, he contrived to obtain that paramount influence over the minds of the princess dowager, and of the heir presumptive, which subsequently effected so important a revolution in the politics of their day. With the exception of a redeeming taste for poetry, antiquities, and the fine arts, a leg of unrivalled symmetry,

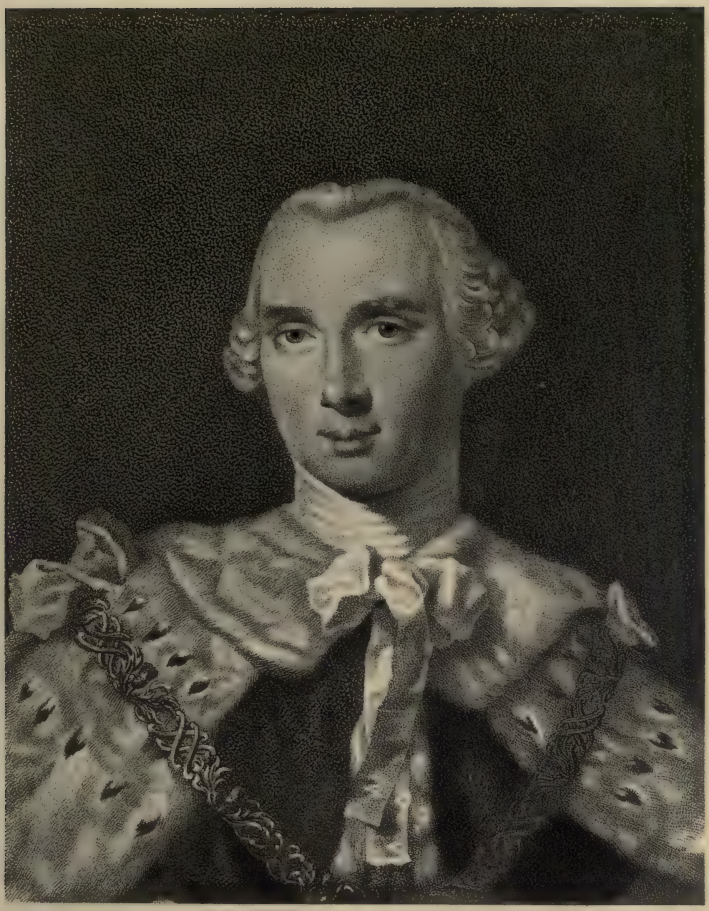
and a talent for shining in drawing-room theatrical performances, Lord Bute's contemporaries would appear to have discovered in him but little merit, and few accomplishments.[1] As for his claims to political judgment and foresight, even his friend and patron, Frederick, Prince of Wales, is said to have derided them. "Bute," once observed the prince, "is a fine, showy man, and would make an excellent ambassador in a court where there is no business."

Even so late as the time of George the Third's

[1] Horace Walpole speaks of the beauty of Lord Bute's leg, which, he says, he took every opportunity of displaying, and more especially to "the poor, captivated princess." Walpole, speaking of Lord Bute's appearance at the court of Frederick, Prince of Wales, observes: "Its chief ornament was the Earl of Bute, a Scotchman, who, having an estate, had passed his youth in studying mathematics and mechanics in his own little island (Bute); then simples in the hedges about Twickenham; and at five and thirty had fallen in love with his own figure, which he produced at masquerades in becoming dresses, and in plays which he acted in private companies with a set of his own relations." Later in life Walpole seems to have materially changed his opinions in regard to the somewhat harsh judgment which he had formed of Lord Bute's abilities and motives. "Lord Bute," he said, "was my schoolfellow. He was a man of taste and science; and I do believe his intentions were good. He wished to blend and unite all parties. The Tories were willing to come in for a share of power after having been so long excluded; but the Whigs were not willing to grant that share. Power is an intoxicating draught. The more a man has, the more he desires." Lord Bute and Walpole had been at Eton together; but, as the earl was the latter's senior by four years, it seems very unlikely that they should have associated much together in their schoolboy days.

John, Earl of Bute.

Photo-etching after a painting by Ramsay



accession, Lord Bute's influence over his mind seems to have been notorious only to the few; indeed, it was not till the leaders of the Whig party found it essential to their interests, as well as to those of the country, to denounce him as the apostle of arbitrary power, that the world in general learned to regard him as the secret and dangerous adviser of his youthful sovereign. Then it was that, at the instigation of the Whig grandees, a popular clamour, as fierce as any recorded in the annals of party virulence, was raised against him and the princess dowager. The middle classes were taught to tremble for their liberties, and the lower orders for the political existence of their idol, Pitt; till one and all became agreed that the German princess and the Scottish earl were the bitterest of England's enemies. Placards, containing the words, "No Petticoat Government! No Scotch Favourite!" were affixed to the walls of Westminster Hall and the Royal Exchange; the name of the princess was publicly and indelicately associated with that of her putative paramour; she was driven from the theatres by the filthy epithets hurled at her from the galleries. The king himself was not exempted from insult. He was one day proceeding in his sedan-chair to visit his mother at Carlton House, when a voice from the mob asked him whether "he was going to suck."

CHAPTER IV.

The King and the Great Whig Aristocracy — Eight Dukes, Five Earls, and One Commoner in the Cabinet — Exclusion of Tories from Place in All Departments of Administration — Bolingbroke's Ideal "Patriot King" — The King's Leaning to the Tories — Whig Jealousy of Bute's Influence at Court — The King's Passion for Lady Sarah Lennox, Youngest Daughter of the Second Duke of Richmond — The King's Personal Feelings Subdued by Considerations of Public Policy — Subsequent History of Lady Sarah Lennox.

So closely connected is the domestic history of George the Third with the political events of his reign as to render it almost impossible to dissociate the one from the other. Fortunately, however, in the war of party and in the animated struggle for ascendency which he so long carried on with the great Whig aristocracy, there is ample and stirring interest. We shall find the sovereign himself heading the party of reaction. We shall find him reviving hopes and aspirations among the Tory clergy and gentry which had been dormant since the days when Atterbury had threatened to put on his lawn sleeves and proclaim the Pretender at Charing Cross, and when Bolingbroke had written to the bishop: "The grief of my soul is this, I see plainly that the Tory party is gone." We

shall find him, not only rebelling against the powerful political party which, for nearly half a century, had dictated to his grandfather and great-grandfather, but eventually triumphing over them, supported though they were by the first statesmen and orators of the age.

At this early period of George the Third's reign, Great Britain may be said to have been ruled over, not by the sovereign of the house of Brunswick, but by a Whig oligarchy composed principally of the powerful houses of Russell, Lennox, Fitzroy, Cavendish, Manners, Bentinck, Wentworth, and Pelham. The Cabinet was constructed almost entirely from this great aristocratic cabal. It consisted of fourteen members, of whom, at one time, no fewer than eight were of ducal rank, namely, the Dukes of Newcastle, Argyle, Bedford, Devonshire, Grafton, Richmond, Montagu, and Dorset. It numbered, moreover, in its ranks the Earls of Harrington, Sandwich, Gower, and Bath. The Earl of Hardwicke was the only member of the Cabinet of plebeian birth. The only commoner was Henry Pelham, brother of the Duke of Newcastle. The great Tory party had long been at a discount. Tory rectors, whose fathers had preached the doctrine of passive obedience in the days of James the Second, and who themselves still sighed for the good old times of convocation and the star-chamber, Tory landholders, whose fathers had fought at Edgehill and

whose sons still drank in secret to the "king over the water," were severally paying the penalty of their long and fruitless devotion to the unhappy and misguided house of Stuart. The Whigs, in fact, were entirely the lords of the ascendant. For more than forty years the vacancies in the peerage had been filled up by commoners of their selection; and not only had they monopolised all the chief appointments in the army and the state, but almost all the subordinate offices in the different public departments were occupied by their retainers or friends. On the other hand, the Tory gentry had not only been overlooked in the appointments to deputy-lieutenancies and the commission of the peace, but had had the mortification of seeing the places, which they regarded as their birthright, conferred, one by one, on men of obscure birth and plebeian occupations. The Tory clergy fared even worse. The great ecclesiastical dignities of the church had been conferred entirely upon Whigs. To such an extent, indeed, had this principle been carried, that, at the time when George the Third ascended the throne, there was not a single bishop, it is said, who was not indebted, either for his lawn sleeves, or else for subsequent promotion to a richer diocese, to the Duke of Newcastle.

This undue amount of influence and power had been the natural consequence of the revolution which placed William of Orange on the throne of

England. During the brief reign of Queen Anne, the Whigs had submitted, uneasily enough, to the temporary ascendency of the Tories. The advent, however, of a new reign revived their hopes. The favourable terms which they had formerly obtained from William the Third, added to the support which it was only natural that George the First should extend to the powerful party who had been mainly instrumental in placing him on the throne, produced the almost immediate effect of restoring the Whigs to the position which they regarded as their legitimate right. Well would it have been for them had they known how to appreciate and use their victory. No sooner, however, did they find themselves masters of the field, — no sooner had the Jacobites been crushed, and the Tories humbled to the dust, — than the victors began to squabble for the spoils. The former violent dissensions between Whig and Tory had, at all events, involved questions of great national and constitutional importance, and had consequently been conducive to the public weal. To that honourable rivalry, however, had succeeded confederacies still more bitterly hostile to one another, disputes no less acrimonious, and intrigues far more contemptible. The party, which still advocated what were called "revolution principles," was not only divided against itself, but the leaders of the rival sections were engaged in ignoble contentions whether the country was to

be governed by a Pelham, a Russell, or a Grenville, and whether the minor spoils of office were to fall to the lot of a Dodington, a Rigby, or a Calcraft. The modern Whig — though he inveighed as loudly as ever against popery and political slavery, and still drank bumpers to the revolutionary toasts of the Calf's Head Club — was only too often a systematic corrupter of popular constituencies, a keen barterer in the traffic for patronage and power, and as little liberal in his political views as the most bigoted Tory. Under the long rule of the great Whig families, the purity of popular representation had become almost a dead letter; the votes of members of the House of Commons were bargained for almost as openly as any other commodity. During the last ten years of Sir Robert Walpole's administration, the cost to the country for secret service money had amounted to little less than a million and a half; in addition to which, there is said to have been scarcely a member of the House of Commons who, if he happened to dine with Sir Robert at a time when his vote was wanted by the government, would not have felt himself aggrieved unless he had discovered a £500 bank-note secreted in the folds of his dinner-napkin. It was even admitted by Sir Robert Walpole himself, that there were only three members of the House of Lords of whose "price" he was ignorant. Indeed, so shamelessly was the trade of corruption

carried on, that even so late as the accession of George the Third, we find the borough of Sudbury, in Suffolk, actually advertised as to be sold to the highest bidder.[1]

That these were crying evils which required a stringent remedy, there are few persons, perhaps, who will feel inclined to dispute. That remedy, as Lord Macaulay points out, clearly lay in a sweeping reform of the representative system; in a wholesome extension of the elective suffrage, and in throwing open the doors of Parliament to the reporters for the public journals; thus allowing the constituent bodies to learn on which side of a question their representatives spoke and voted. As yet, however, neither Whigs nor Tories were prepared to advocate so enlightened a policy. The court, on the other hand, was prepared with a remedy of its own. To emancipate the new sovereign from the humiliating thraldom in which his grandfather and great-grandfather had been kept by the great Whig lords, to render the Crown in future respectable and respected, and to restore to the Tory party a fair, if not dominant share, of political influence, were among the first principles which George the Third had imbibed from the advisers of his youth. The young king, be it remembered, had been early and deeply impregnated with the brilliant fal-

[1] Sudbury escaped the proscription of 1832, but was subsequently disfranchised in 1844.

lacies of that fantastic political school of which Lord Bolingbroke may be said to have been the founder. That school not only held up to reprobation the overgrown tyranny of the Whig party, but proposed to restore to the Crown the powers which had been usurped by the "great families." The King of Great Britain, argued Bolingbroke and his proselytes, ought to be the king of his people, and not the king of Whigs and Tories; he ought to be alike the supreme chief as well as the friend and father of his people; he was in fact to be a "patriot king;" his principal duties should consist in setting his face against all political factions; in selecting as his ministers, independent of their being Whigs or Tories, the wisest, the most upright, and the most experienced statesmen of his time; and lastly, in maintaining the purity of Parliament, and trampling bribery and corruption under foot.[1]

Theoretically speaking, these hypotheses were plausible enough. Practically speaking, they were fraught with imminent peril to the state. Had they unhappily been carried into effect, the proper balance of power between king, lords, and commons would have been at an end. The standard

[1] Sir Joseph Yorke writes to Sir Andrew Mitchell, shortly after the king's accession: "In what way the new Parliament will be chosen, we shall soon see. I hear the fashion at court is to say it shall be a Parliament of the people's own choosing; which, in these times, may open the door to new cabals and difficulties, though the principle of it may be wise and honest."

axiom, "*Vox populi, vox Dei,*" would have become a dead letter. That the young king, in adopting the Utopian fallacies of the princess dowager and Lord Bute, proposed to extend the royal prerogative beyond the limits prescribed by his coronation oath, and, much more, that he deliberately contemplated the enslavement of his people, we are far from being inclined to believe. But, on the other hand, admitting him to have possessed all the good intentions and all the virtues requisite to constitute a perfect "patriot king," where was the guarantee that his successors would practise a similar forbearance? It is not often that a Marcus Aurelius succeeds to an Antoninus Pius. That a vast amount of political profligacy and corruption would have been swept away can scarcely be doubted; but, on the other hand, had the court carried its point, there was the risk of incurring a despotism as intolerable as that which had existed in the days when Strafford and Archbishop Laud delivered their hateful judgments in the star-chamber at Westminster, and cut off the ears of far better citizens than themselves.

In the meantime, the majority of the Whigs, confident in their own long-established power, appear to have awaited with curiosity, rather than alarm, the development of the new political system. Lord Bute they regarded, or affected to regard, with the profoundest contempt. That a Scottish representative peer, who had not only

never served any official apprenticeship under the state, but who was also unconnected with the great English Whig lords by the ties of blood or family interest, should have the presumption to enter the lists against them, was a contingency which was long in forcing itself upon their convictions. Moreover, least of all men could Pitt have imagined that, in the height of his power and popularity, he was destined to be thrust on one side, in order to make room for one whom he regarded as a mere pedantic groom of the stole, a led captain of the princess dowager, the mere fortunate hanger-on of a court. In former days, when Pitt had held the appointment of groom of the bedchamber to Frederick, Prince of Wales, he and Bute had doubtless been thrown a good deal into each other's society. For some time, however, as we learn from Horace Walpole, they had "been on the coldest terms."

Deep as was the interest which the young king took in passing political events, he was not the less predisposed to be influenced by the romantic feelings which are natural to youth. His passion for the fair Quakeress, Hannah Lightfoot, had passed away. A nobler-born, and perhaps lovelier girl had taken her place in his heart.

Lady Sarah Lennox, the lady alluded to, was the youngest daughter of Charles, second Duke of Richmond. At the period when she captivated her sovereign, she was only in her seventeenth year. Her contemporaries not only unanimously

accord her the meed of surpassing loveliness, but assign to her a bewitching fascination of manner, which is said to have characterised her even in extreme old age. "Lady Sarah Lennox," writes Horace Walpole, in describing the fair forms which subsequently walked in the nuptial train of Charlotte of Mecklenburg, "was by far the chief angel." And again, in chronicling her performance of the part of Jane Shore at some private theatricals at Holland House, he writes: "Lady Sarah was in white, with her hair about her ears, and on the ground. No Magdalen by Correggio was ever half so lovely and expressive."

As may be readily imagined, the king's predilection for this beautiful girl could not long be kept a secret from the lynx-eyed denizens of a court. The laws of England opposed no obstacle to their union, and accordingly the most ambitious hopes began to be entertained by the house of Lennox. On the other hand, the princess dowager and Lord Bute were thrown into a corresponding state of consternation. Whenever the king and Lady Sarah were together, it was evident that Lord Bute was under orders to interrupt their tête-à-tête conversations. So little control, indeed, had the princess over her feelings, that more than once she is said to have thrust herself in Lady Sarah's way, and to have burst out into an offensive laugh in her face. What provision, indeed, could she expect for her children, — what consideration could

she hope for for herself — in the event of the king becoming a cipher in the hands of a lovely girl and her aspiring relatives?

The family of Lady Sarah Lennox, and especially her ambitious brother-in-law, Henry Fox, afterward Lord Holland, missed no opportunity of throwing her in the king's way. So long as the court remained in London, so long was Lady Sarah detained at Holland House, the proximity of which to St. James's was a favourable circumstance for the intriguers. There, on the fine summer mornings, in the broad meadow which lies in front of that interesting old mansion, Lady Sarah, attired in a half-fancy costume, resembling a peasant's, was to be seen gracefully taking her share in the labours of the haymakers. Thither likewise, on those fine mornings, the king was to be seen directing his horse's head, in the hope of finding an opportunity of exchanging a few words with the object of his affections, who doubtless greeted her royal admirer with her sweetest smiles. The king was young and handsome, and Lady Sarah — notwithstanding she is said to have been in love at the time with Lord Newbottle, afterward Marquis of Lothian — had no objection to become a queen.

The fourth of June, 1761, — the first anniversary of the king's birth since his accession, — was kept by him with considerable magnificence. On that day, amidst the brilliant company which he

had assembled at St. James's, Lady Sarah was the observed of all observers. "The birthday," writes Horace Walpole to Lady Ailesbury, "exceeded the splendour of Haroun Alraschid and the 'Arabian Nights,' when people had nothing to do but to scour a lantern and send a genie for a hamper of diamonds and rubies. Do you remember one of those stories, where a prince has eight statues of diamonds, which he overlooks because he fancies he wants a ninth, and, to his great surprise, the ninth proves to be pure flesh and blood, which he never thought of? Somehow or other, Lady Sarah is the ninth statue; and, you will allow, has better white and red than if she was made of pearls and rubies."

The king would seem to have made but little secret of his passion. His confidante was Lady Susan Strangways, Lady Sarah's friend and kinswoman.[1] According to an account of the king's attachment which, more than six years afterward, Mr. Thomas Pitt related to George Grenville, "his Majesty came to Lady Susan Strangways in

[1] Lady Susannah Sarah Louisa Strangways, daughter of Stephen, first Earl of Ilchester, and niece to Mr. Fox, was at this period in her nineteenth year. In April, 1764, she married William O'Brien, a popular actor. "A melancholy affair," writes Walpole, "has happened to Lord Ilchester. His eldest daughter, Lady Susan, a very pleasing girl, though not handsome, married herself, two days ago, at Covent Garden Church, to O'Brien, a handsome young actor. Lord Ilchester doated on her, and was the most indulgent of fathers. 'Tis a cruel blow."

the drawing-room, asked her in a whisper if she did not think the coronation [would be] a much finer sight if there was a queen. She said, 'Yes.' He then asked her if she did not know somebody who would grace that ceremony in the properest manner. At this she was much embarrassed, thinking he meant herself, but he went on and said: 'I mean your friend, Lady Sarah Lennox. Tell her so; and let me have her answer the next drawing-room day.'" Lady Susan happening, on one occasion, to mention that she was about to leave London, "I hope not," said the king; and immediately afterward he added: "But you return in the summer for the coronation?" "I hope so, sir," replied Lady Susan. "But," continued the king, "they talk of a wedding. There have been many proposals, but I think an English match would do better than a foreign one. Pray tell Lady Sarah I say so." No wonder, after such conversations, that the hopes of Lady Sarah and of her family should have been raised to the highest pitch.

A marriage, however, between George the Third and the loveliest of his subjects was not an event which was destined to take place. "It is well known," writes Sir Nathaniel Wraxall, "that before his marriage the king distinguished by his partiality Lady Sarah Lennox, then one of the most beautiful young women of high rank in the kingdom. Edward the Fourth or Henry the Eighth, in his situation, would have married and

placed her on the throne. Charles the Second, more licentious, would have endeavoured to seduce her. But the king, who, though he admired her, neither desired to make her his wife nor his mistress, subdued his passion by the strength of his reason, his principles, and his sense of public duty." That George the Third had no desire to marry Lady Sarah was certainly not the case. Indeed, there cannot be a doubt but that it was the ardent wish of his heart to make her his wife. Exercising, however, that admirable command over his passions, which more than once distinguished him during the difficulties of his subsequent career, he resolved on rendering the gratification of his desires dependent upon the interests of his subjects, and subsequently succeeded in alienating himself from her society.

Jealousy of Lord Newbottle — according to the further account in the "Grenville Papers" — was another cause of the king breaking off with Lady Sarah, and of his offering his hand to Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz. "Whilst this was in agitation," writes Mr. Grenville, "Lady Sarah used to meet the king in his rides early in the morning, driving a little chaise with Lady Susan Strangways; and once, it is said, that, wanting to speak to him, she went dressed like a servant-maid, and stood amongst the crowd in the guard-room, to say a few words to him as he passed by." In Mr. Grenville's further words, Lady Sarah, at one and

the same time, "found herself deprived of a crown and of her lover, Lord Newbottle, who complained as much of her as she did of the king."

Of the passion of George the Third for Lady Sarah Lennox, the few particulars that remain to be told may be here related. Of the ten unmarried daughters of dukes and earls who were subsequently the bridesmaids to Charlotte of Mecklenburg on her marriage with the king, Lady Sarah was one; her friend, Lady Susan Strangways, another. During the ceremony the courtiers watched the countenance of the king, which, however, betrayed no emotion, till the Archbishop of Canterbury came to the words in the marriage service, "And as thou didst send thy blessing upon Abraham and Sarah to their great comfort, so vouchsafe to send thy blessing upon these thy servants," when the king's uneasiness was perceptible to every one. Not less embarrassing to him was an incident which occurred at the drawing-room on the following day. Among the persons who appeared for presentation was John, Earl of Westmoreland, who in his youth had fought under the great Marlborough, but who was now advanced in years and afflicted with partial blindness.[1] Unluckily he chanced to mistake Lady Sarah for her royal mistress, and was only prevented kneeling and doing homage to her by the prompt interference of the bystanders.

[1] The earl died on the 26th of August, the following year.

The depth of the king's attachment to Lady Sarah Lennox cannot admit of a doubt. Many years afterward, he happened to attend the theatre during one of the performances of the charming actress, Mrs. Pope, who, both in face and manner, was thought to bear a strong resemblance to Lady Sarah. The events of days gone by rushed back to his memory; the presence of the queen was forgotten, and, in a moment of melancholy abstraction, he was heard to murmur to himself: "She is like Lady Sarah still!" Lady Sarah, it may be mentioned, married first, on the 2d of June, 1762, Sir Thomas Charles Bunbury, Bart., who in our own time figured so conspicuously as the patron and father of the turf; and secondly, in 1781, the Hon. George Napier, by whom she became the mother of Sir William Napier, the author of the "History of the Peninsular War," and of his not less distinguished brother, Sir Charles. Her death took place on the 20th of August, 1826, in the eighty-second year of her age. During the last years of her life she was completely blind, an affliction which she endured with the most exemplary cheerfulness and resignation to the will of Providence. Lady Sarah was great-granddaughter — perhaps the last surviving one — of Charles the Second.

CHAPTER V.

The Princess Dowager's Efforts to Preserve Her Influence on the King's Mind — Bute's Political Intrigues — Changes in the Government, and Accession of Bute to Office as Secretary of State — Weakness of the Whig Party, Owing to Dissensions among the "Great Families" — Career of William Pitt, afterward Earl of Chatham — Success of Pitt's Policy as Secretary of State and War Minister — His Efficiency as an Administrator — Public Confidence in His Abilities and Patriotism — His Personal Influence in the House of Commons and the Cabinet — Pitt's Opposition to the Bourbon "Family Compact" Defeated by Bute — Fall of Pitt — His Popularity Impaired by His Acceptance of a Peerage for His Wife and a Pension for Himself — His Emotion on Delivering the Seals of Office to the King.

In the meantime, the princess dowager, elated at the result of her opposition to the king's marriage with Lady Sarah Lennox, was quietly pursuing her favourite, though unsuccessful, project of obtaining a paramount influence over the mind of her son; while Lord Bute, on his part, was no less deeply intent on maturing measures for driving the Whigs from power, and procuring his own aggrandisement in the event of their fall. During the first five months of the king's reign, the earl had contented himself with being sworn a privy councillor and holding the subordinate post of

groom of the stole; but the time, in his opinion, had now arrived when a blow might be struck at the "great families" with impunity. Accordingly, as a preliminary measure, the king, by the earl's advice, was induced to dismiss from the post of chancellor of the exchequer an efficient statesman, Henry Bilson Legge, a younger son of William, first Earl of Dartmouth, who, in addition to being a Whig, appears to have given other and graver offence to the court. For instance, when, on delivering up the seals to the king in the royal closet, he happened to intimate that his future life should testify to his zeal for his Majesty's service, "I am glad of it," replied the king, "for nothing but your future life can eradicate the ill impressions which I have received of you." The post of chancellor of the exchequer, vacated by Legge, was forthwith filled up by William, Viscount Barrington, at this time secretary at war, whose removal from that situation made room for the celebrated Charles Townshend.

These changes were followed, only three days afterward, by another and far more important arrangement, the appointment of Lord Bute as secretary of state in the room of the Earl of Holderness, who received a pension of £4,000 a year, and the reversion of the wardenship of the Cinque Ports. The king, it appears, charged Holderness with incapacity, and even included Pitt in the reprehensions which escaped him on

this occasion. "I have two secretaries of state," he said; "one who can do nothing, and one who will do nothing." "As if," observes Walpole, significantly, "subduing Europe was to be reckoned nothing!"

That the great Whig lords should not only have submitted without a struggle to these significant changes, but that more than one of them should have actually recommended Lord Bute to the king for the office of secretary of state,[1] appears, on first reflection, to be almost incomprehensible. Certainly the game, had they chosen to play it out, would seem to have been entirely in their hands. Lord Bute, it should be borne in mind, was at the head of no party in the state; his manners were cold and ungracious; he was without the advantage of political experience, and, although he was in his forty-eighth year, he had never once, we believe, risen to speak in Parliament. Previously to the present reign his name had been unknown beyond the precincts of the court, and since then, owing to his having been a Scotchman, a Tory, and a favourite, it had become familiar only to be reprobated. On the

[1] The king told Rose in 1804 that it was owing to the solicitations of the Dukes of Newcastle and Devonshire, that he had been induced to consent to Lord Bute's appointment as secretary of state. According also to the king's sister, the Duchess of Brunswick, the persons who most eagerly pressed Lord Bute upon the king at this time were the Duke of Devonshire and the Marquis of Rockingham.

other hand, ministers were backed by the vast wealth and enormous borough interest of the great Whig party; the secret service money was at their disposal; the church and state, in consequence of their long tenure of office, were filled with their creatures and partisans; and lastly, they had the advantages of the commanding talents and unbounded popularity of Pitt.

But unfortunately, the "great families" had become more than ever divided amongst themselves. The powerful Russell and Pelham factions had ceased to be allies; the Duke of Rutland was dissatisfied with his office of steward of the household; the Duke of Bedford was angry at General Conway having been selected to command in Germany, in preference to General Waldegrave; the Duke of Newcastle was stealthily intriguing to get Mr. Pitt out of the ministry; and lastly, Fox was more than suspected of being engaged in a plot to turn out Newcastle.

Another subject of disagreement among the Whig leaders was the policy of continuing or discontinuing the war. To Pitt personally this was a question of the most lively interest. A period of warfare, which, to the great majority of official men is natually a source of inquietude, was to Pitt a season of pleasurable excitement. It was the late war, with its long series of triumphs by sea and land, which had rendered his name illustrious over the world; peace, moreover, at this period,

he believed to be diametrically opposed to the interests of his country, and accordingly in the Cabinet he brought all his eloquence and all his influence into play in support of the continuance of hostilities.

On the side of Pitt were arrayed his brothers-in-law, Lord Temple and James Grenville; while, on the other hand, the Duke of Bedford, the Earl of Hardwicke, George Grenville, and Fox were as strenuously in favour of peace. As regarded the public in general, the lower classes — grateful to Pitt for the exhilarating spectacles which he had so often afforded them, of French banners carried in triumph to St. Paul's, and French cannon dragged to the Tower — appear to have been almost unanimously in favour of war, while, among the upper and middle classes, opinion seems to have been more nearly divided. At all events, a large portion of the community — composed in part of persons who were moved by reason and conviction, and in part of those who held the opinion of Franklin, that a bad peace is preferable to no peace at all — was anxious by any safe and honourable means to bring the war to a close. The treasury, argued the peacemakers, had become very nearly drained by the enormous cost of the war; the armies of France had been routed in every quarter; her resources were very nearly exhausted; and accordingly now, they said, was the proper and propitious moment for

Great Britain to dictate terms to her humbled enemy.

It was on the support of the powerful peace party that Bute, in a great measure, relied for the success of his double and daring design of ejecting the Whigs from power, and introducing into the political system his own notions of good government and good laws. The chief obstacle that stood in his way was Pitt. It was calculated with much reason by Bute, that, could Pitt be either induced or forced to retire from the government, peace would become a measure of comparatively easy accomplishment; that with the cessation of hostilities much of the influence and popularity of that illustrious man would necessarily cease; that the present government, of which Pitt's genius, eloquence, and virtues were the mainstays, might then with little difficulty be overthrown; that Bute's own elevation to the premiership would be the almost certain consequence of that event; that, by bringing to a close a long and costly war, he should earn the gratitude, and establish himself in the affections, of his fellow countrymen; and lastly, that enjoying, as he did, the full confidence and support of his sovereign, he should be enabled to render his administration a durable as well as a popular one.

Bute, it is needless to say, accomplished his object of becoming first minister of the crown, but it was by means singularly impolitic. Instead of

entering, as he did, into personal rivalry with the greatest statesmen of his age; instead of forcing his own incapacity and insignificance into glaring contrast with the brilliant genius of his antagonist; instead of making a martyr of Pitt by driving him from an office which he had filled with a skill and success beyond all former precedent, Bute should have patiently waited, and watched the progress of events. So unnatural an alliance as that which existed between Pitt and Newcastle promised to be of no very long continuance. Newcastle, moreover, was advanced in years; Pitt was a martyr to disease. Death, therefore, might remove the one: increased infirmities might incapacitate the other. Greatly as Pitt was loved by his countrymen, a single defeat, or even a doubtful victory, might rob him of his popularity. Bute, however, was fated to commit a series of irreparable errors. True it is that he contrived to achieve a temporary triumph, but it was destined to be dearly purchased by the disgrace and danger which accompanied his fall. When Pitt fell, it was with the proud satisfaction of knowing that he still filled as large a space in the affections of his countrymen as in the days when, in the midst of storm and tempest, Hawke swept the French fleet from the waters in Quiberon Bay, or when the British standard first floated in triumph on the citadel of Quebec. Far different was the fall of Bute. When he fell, it was with the miserable con-

viction that his blunders had entailed on his sovereign an amount of unpopularity, and on himself a degree of popular hatred, such as will be found rarely paralleled in the annals of court favouritism.

William Pitt, afterward Earl of Chatham, was born in 1708. He was educated at Eton, and afterward at Utrecht [1] and at Trinity College, Oxford. After having served a short period in the army, as a cornet in the "Blues," he obtained a seat in Parliament, in 1735, as member for Old Sarum. In the House of Commons, his abilities and oratorical powers speedily rendered him eminent. In 1746 he was appointed vice-treasurer of Ireland, and afterward paymaster-general of the forces, and in 1756 George the Second, yielding to the universal outcry of the nation, delivered to him the seals as secretary of state.

At this period Great Britain had been reduced almost to the lowest ebb of national degradation. For a considerable time past, defeat had been followed by defeat, and disaster by disaster. The unfortunate expedition of General Braddock against Fort Duquesne; the unsuccessful attempt against Ticonderoga; the failure of the expedition against Rochefort, and the unsatis-

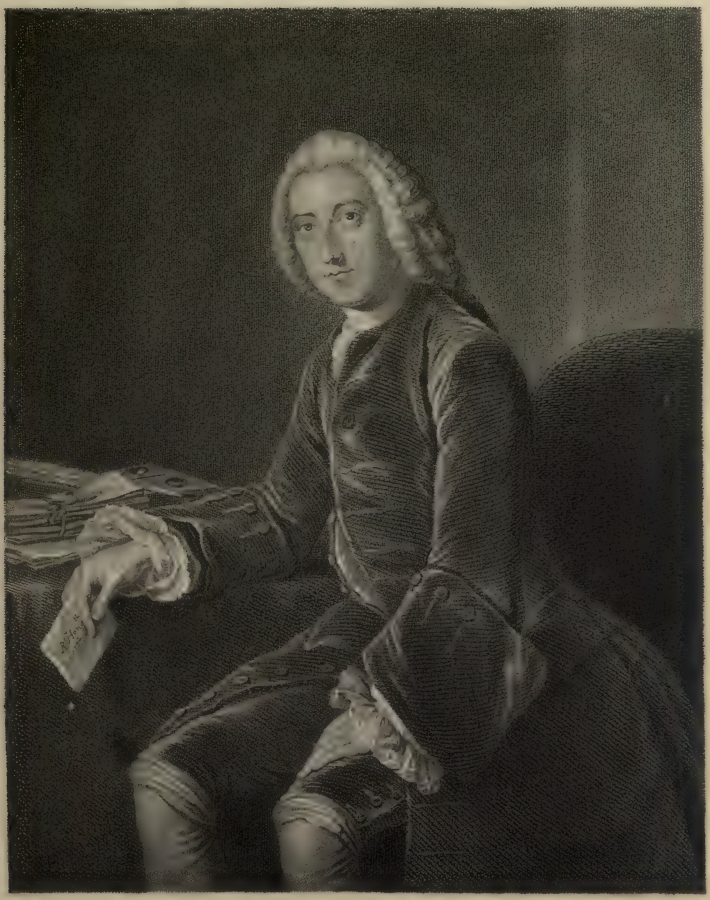
[1] The fact of Lord Chatham having received a part of his education at the University of Utrecht has apparently not been noticed by any of his biographers. He himself, however, records the fact in a letter to the Earl of Shelburne, dated October 12, 1766.

factory result of the naval engagement between Admiral Byng and Galissonière, had alike grievously tarnished the public honour, and fiercely exasperated the people of England against their leaders. It was under these circumstances that England demanded the services of Pitt as the wisest, the most eloquent, and one of the most virtuous of her sons. The wisdom of the selection was very shortly made manifest. Scarcely had Pitt taken the helm before the tide of national ignominy rolled back. As if with the wand of a magician, he stirred up the spirit of a gallant people; in every part of the globe success attended the British arms; the fleets which had formerly threatened England were swept from the seas; before the close of the war no fewer than thirty-six sail-of-the-line, fifty frigates, and forty-five sloops-of-war had been either captured or destroyed; France and Spain had been humiliated and Canada and half of Hindostan had been added, to the territorial possessions of Great Britain. Mr. Pitt, in fact, lived to see England the most powerful nation in Europe, and his own name dreaded over the world. "Il faut avouer," said Frederick the Great, King of Prussia, "que l'Angleterre a été longtemps en travail, et qu'elle a beaucoup soufferte pour produire M. Pitt; mais enfin elle est accouchée d'un homme."

Pitt, though not without his foibles and weaknesses, was unquestionably a great man. He

William Pitt, Earl of Chatham.

Photo-etching after the painting by Hoare.



possessed a mind singularly fertile in resources; a perception as clear in devising expedients as he was prompt in carrying them into execution; an undaunted courage which never shrank from incurring responsibility; and an originality of genius which led him to despise precedents, and to regard as trifling hindrances such obstacles as to inferior intellects appeared to be impossibilities. To him the smiles or frowns of his sovereign, the applause or censure of the multitude, the loss of office or the tenure of power, were as nothing compared with the one noble and all-absorbing object of his life, the aggrandisement and prosperity of his native country. In the noblest sense of the word he was a patriot. He loved his country, and in the dark hours of her declining grandeur is said to have been impressed with the prophetic conviction that he was destined to save her. "My lord," he once said to the Duke of Devonshire, "I am sure that I can save this country, and that nobody else can."

Pitt had no sooner been installed as secretary of state and war minister, than he began to establish a severe despotism over every naval and military department of the state. He not only exacted obedience from those who served under him, but prompt, tacit, implicit obedience. In the different offices connected with the War Department, not only the under-secretaries and the heads of departments, but even the subordinate clerks,

were taught to feel that they were under the eye of a severe taskmaster — one who was almost as conversant with their duties as they were themselves. On one occasion, when confined to his bed by the gout, he sent a message to the master-general of the ordnance, Sir Charles Frederick, to attend him immediately. "The battering-train from the Tower," he told him, "must be at Portsmouth by to-morrow morning at seven o'clock." The master-general attempted to explain to him that it was impossible. "At your peril, sir," said the great minister, "let it be done; and let an express be sent to me from every stage till the train arrives." By seven o'clock the train was at Portsmouth.

Over the minds of such naval and military men as were brought into communication with him, Pitt acquired a still more remarkable influence. The dignity of his demeanour, the grandeur of his views, and the clearness with which he explained them, impressed them at once with the conviction that they were in the presence of a great man. When they left him, to obey his orders in a foreign land, they felt that he had instilled into them a portion of his own sanguine and indomitable spirit; that they were about to serve under the eye of one who had both the genius to appreciate great deeds, and the power and generosity to reward them; that his clear and piercing eye would be ever upon them; that they would receive from

him every assistance and encouragement which a commander could expect from his employer; that their glory would be his glory; that though he might forgive rashness and want of judgment, he would never pardon overcaution; that in his eyes adventurous gallantry was a virtue, and timidity a crime. Civilian though he was, they felt that the ablest commander might not only obey his instructions without a blush, but adopt his suggestions with advantage. "He was possessed," said Colonel Barré, on one occasion, in the House of Commons, "of the happy talent of transfusing his own zeal into the souls of all those who were to have a share in carrying his projects into execution; and it is a matter well known to many officers now in the House, that no man ever entered the earl's closet who did not feel himself, if possible, braver at his return than when he went in." To those who were employed by him he ever extended his fullest support. A general officer having on one occasion been asked by Pitt what number of men he would require to enable him to succeed in carrying out a certain expedition, the reply was: "Ten thousand." "Then you shall have twelve thousand," said the minister, "and if you do not succeed it will be your own fault." "To push expense," he once said, in defending the army estimates, "is the best policy." "The war," writes Lady Hervey, "has cost us a great deal, it is true; but then we have had success and

honour for our money. Before Mr. Pitt came in we spent vast sums only to purchase disgrace and infamy." Irresolution — that weakness so often fatal to the reputation of eminent men and to the success of great measures — it was not in his nature to feel, nor was he ready to pardon it in others. "Irresolution," once observed his rival, Henry Fox, "has been a general and is surely a fatal fault. I think Pitt almost the only man that I have seen in power who had not that fault, though he had many others."

Thus by degrees did Pitt instil his own adventurous and undaunted spirit, his own love of country, and his own passion for glory and confidence of success, not only into the breasts of every naval and military commander, but into that of each soldier of the army and each sailor in the fleet. No minister of this country was ever served with such promptitude and cheerfulness. That he was, to a great extent, indebted for the success of his measures to the large supplies of money which his countrymen placed at his disposal, there can be no question. Fully sensible of the false economy of waging cheap wars; of the folly and cruelty of sending out insufficient numbers of men, defective artillery, and half-manned ships, he was resolved that, so long as he remained war minister of England, no single individual, either in the army or the navy, should plead want of sufficient support as an excuse for failure or defeat. Moreover,

whenever he had an enterprise in contemplation, he ever selected the individual whom he believed to be the most competent to achieve success. The patronage which accrues to office he gave up to his country. For the claims of political friends, or the pleadings of pretty women, he had no ear. For high family connection and its pretensions he entertained the profoundest contempt.

Nobly, indeed, did the "Great Commoner" — as his countrymen loved to style him [1] — concentrate his energies, his talents, and his virtues, to restore the fallen credit of his country. Nobly did he conduct toward a glorious conclusion a war which, had it been managed by a statesman of inferior genius, might have been protracted for twenty years longer, at tenfold the expense, and probably with a tenth only of the success with which it was crowned. So invariable, indeed, under the auspices of Pitt, became the triumph of the British arms, that during the later encounters between England and her foes, the one, when they met, looked for victory as a matter of course, while the other appeared already panic-struck by the prospect of defeat. "There is scarcely more credit to be got," said a contemporary, "in beating a Frenchman than in beating a women."

The influence which Pitt exercised over the

[1] The appellation of the "Great Commoner" was not originally given to Pitt, but by Pitt to the eminent citizen and senator, Sir John Barnard.

minds of his countrymen was nowhere more remarkably displayed than in the House of Commons. Its members, forced to acquiesce in the supremacy of his genius, accepted him as a dictator in everything except in name. The deference which they paid him was manifested, not only in the vast sums which they voted him without inquiry and without a murmur, but also in the awe in which each, individually, stood of his impassioned denunciations and withering taunts. On one occasion, it is said, a member, somewhat bolder than his fellows, arose to prefer a charge of inconsistency against the great minister. Pitt fixed on him a single look of mingled astonishment and scorn. That single look was sufficient. After having muttered a few unintelligible words, the unfortunate man gladly resumed his seat, and his insignificance.

The confidence in Pitt's genius and patriotism which pervaded the army, the navy, and the senate, was equalled, if not surpassed, by the love and veneration with which he was regarded by the masses of the people. They loved him, not only because he had provided them with conquests and triumphs, instead of humiliation and defeat, not only because under his auspices the commerce of England had kept pace with her ancient military renown, but because he was also the "Great Commoner," the minister of their own creation and choice, because it was his boast that he de-

rived his power, not from the favour of kings, but from the middle classes of his countrymen, and, lastly, because, notwithstanding the vast services which he had conferred on the state, notwithstanding he had rendered himself the terror of France and the admiration of Europe, he was still simply Mr. Pitt, without a sinecure, and above a bribe; without a Garter upon his knee, or even a riband across his breast.

In the Cabinet, as elsewhere, Pitt's ascendency was paramount; so much so, indeed, that latterly he appears to have manifested an assumption of superiority, in his intercourse with his colleagues, which amounted almost to rudeness. On one occasion, for instance, we find the Duke of Newcastle groaning at his bullying propensities, and at another time Lord Bute complaining of the insolent treatment which he had experienced from him. To Rigby, Newcastle freely admitted "the dread the whole Council used to be in lest Mr. Pitt should frown."

Such was the statesman whose eminent services the king and Lord Bute proposed to dispense with at the earliest convenient opportunity. Pitt, who had witnessed the dismissal of Legge with satisfaction, and even the removal of Holderness without alarm, began at last to perceive that the days of his own official existence were numbered. The growing influence of Bute in the Cabinet, the coldness of the king's manner toward himself,

the removal of more than one of his colleagues, and the intrigues and desertion of others, would probably ere long have induced him to throw up the seals, when the following events occurred which left him no choice but to tender his resignation.

France, weakened and humiliated, had induced Charles the Third, King of Spain, to join with her in a secret treaty, known afterward by the name of the "Family Compact," by which the two princes of the house of Bourbon engaged to make common cause against England. By some means or other Pitt had become cognisant of the treaty, and accordingly he proposed, by the immediate adoption of certain vigorous measures, to anticipate the hostile intentions of Spain. It was his earnest advice to the Cabinet that orders should be forthwith despatched to the Earl of Bristol, the British ambassador at Madrid, instructing him to demand a sight of the treaty, and, in the event of the requisition not being acceded to, that war should immediately be declared against Spain. Moreover, simultaneously with this bold stroke of policy, he proposed that a fleet, consisting of not less than twelve or fourteen sail-of-the-line, should at once be despatched to Cadiz. To use his own words: "I submitted to a trembling Council my advice for an immediate declaration of war with Spain." Had this advice been followed, Pitt would in all probability have earned fresh laurels for himself, and laid his country under

deeper obligations than ever. Spain might have lost her American fleet and its golden cargoes; Havana, Martinique, and the Philippine Islands would probably have been at the mercy of Great Britain.

But Bute was now all-powerful in the Cabinet, and accordingly he was not only the first person to raise his voice against the measures proposed by Pitt, but had even the temerity to denounce them as "rash and unadvisable." Lord Temple alone of all the ministers warmly supported the policy of his illustrious brother-in-law. The remainder — some of them from timidity, some, perhaps, from motives of envy and self-interest, and others from doubting, or affecting to doubt, the authenticity of Pitt's information — recorded their votes against their despotic colleague. Pitt therefore had no choice but to resign. He was grateful, he said at the Council-table, to those members of the Cabinet who had given him their support during the war. As for himself, he added, he had been called to the ministry by the voice of the people; it was to them that he looked upon himself as responsible, and in justice to them it was impossible for him to continue in a situation which made him answerable for measures over which he had no longer any control. Indignation at the solemn and intrepid deference paid by Pitt to the will of the people, the president of the Council, Earl Granville, rose from his seat. "When the gentleman," he said, "talks of being respon-

sible to the people, he talks the language of the House of Commons, and forgets that at this board he is only responsible to the king. However, though he may possibly have convinced himself of his infallibility, still it remains that we should be equally convinced, before we can resign our understandings to his direction, or join with him in the measure he proposes."

Thus fell Mr. Pitt after having performed greater services for his king and country than ever, before or since, have been rendered by a British statesman. No sooner was it publicly known that he had ceased to be a minister of the Crown, than the nation, in the words of Walpole, was "thunderstruck, alarmed, indignant." The City of London boldly proposed an address to the king, desiring to be acquainted with the cause of his dismissal. Others suggested a vote of public thanks and condolence to the fallen minister. Many went so far as to propose a general mourning as in a time of national affliction.

Such was the excited state of the public mind when, only four days after Pitt's resignation, it was announced, to the indignation of many, and to the astonishment of all, that the "Great Commoner" had stooped to accept a peerage for his wife, and a pension of £3,000 a year for himself. That so illustrious a statesman, and hitherto so pure a patriot, should have condescended to become a pensioner of the state will probably be

ever related of him as a matter of regret. But, after all, that Pitt merited one-half of the obloquy which was cast upon him, may very fairly be questioned. "It is a shame," said Burke, "that any defence should be necessary. What eye cannot distinguish the difference between this, and the exceptional cases of titles and pensions? What Briton, with the smallest sense of honour and gratitude, but must blush for his country if such a man retired unrewarded from the public service, let the motives for that retirement be what they would? It was not possible that his sovereign should let his eminent services pass unrequited. The sum that was given was undoubtedly inadequate to his merits; and the *quantum* was rather regulated by the moderation of the great mind that received it, than by the liberality of that which bestowed it." Lord Temple also writes to Wilkes on the 16th of October, 1761: "The Duke of Marlborough, Prince Ferdinand, Sir Edward Hawke, etc., etc., did not disdain to receive pecuniary and honorary rewards for their services, perhaps of a very inferior kind to the deserts of Mr. Pitt. I think, therefore, he would have been the most insolent, factious, and ungrateful man living to the king, had he waived an offer of this sort, which binds him to nothing but to love and to honour his Majesty."

It has been charged against the king and Lord Bute that, in pressing favours upon the fallen

minister, their real and sinister object was to exhibit him in the invidious light of a pensioner and a patrician, and thus rob him of his great popularity with his fellow countrymen. "The king," writes Walpole, "was advised to heap rewards on his late minister: the princess pressed it eagerly." According to a modern writer whose judgment is of value, "it was an artful stroke of policy, thus at once to conciliate and weaken the popular statesman whose opposition was to be dreaded, — and it succeeded." Such may possibly have been the state of the case, but, at all events, Pitt himself appears to have been the last person to suspect the imposition which, if it had existed, could scarcely have escaped the observation of one so well acquainted with human nature, as well as with party expedients and devices. As regards the grant of a peerage to Lady Chatham, we learn from no less well-informed a person than her brother, George Grenville, that, so far from its having been forced upon the retiring minister, it was "earnestly pressed" by Pitt, and "with great difficulty" acquiesced in by the king; the truth of which statement seems to be borne out by Pitt's own words, in a letter to Bute, dated the 7th of October, that he should be, "above all, doubly happy could he see those dearer to him than himself comprehended in his Majesty's monuments of royal approbation and goodness." Pitt, in fact, was at this time all gratitude for the

favours conferred upon him. To the king, personally, he not only expressed himself as sincerely and deeply grateful, but, on delivering up the seals in the royal closet, was singularly and painfully affected. "Yesterday," writes the Duke of Newcastle to the Duke of Bedford, on the 6th, "Mr. Pitt waited upon the king, and resigned the seals. He expressed great concern that he was obliged to take that step from his differences of opinion with all the rest of the Council; that he thought his remaining in office would only create difficulties and altercations in his Majesty's councils, and that out of office he would do everything in his power to support his Majesty, and recommended himself to his goodness." He almost wished, he told the king, that his services had been left unrewarded, in order that, as an entirely independent man, he might have opportunities of showing how deep was his gratitude, how disinterested was his zeal and affection for his sovereign. When the young king expressed his regret at losing the services of so able a servant, "Sir," said Mr. Pitt, "I confess I had but too much reason to expect your Majesty's displeasure, I did not come prepared for this exceeding goodness: pardon me, sir, — it overpowers, — it oppresses me," and he burst into tears. "Are you not amazed at Mr. Pitt," writes Mrs. Montagu to Mrs. Carter, "for throwing up the seals just before the meeting of a new Parliament? I pity the young king, who, in the

season of life made for cheerfulness, and most exempt from care, has such a weight thrown upon him as the government at present. Dangers alarm the experienced, but must alarm and terrify the inexperienced."

CHAPTER VI.

Negotiations for the Marriage of the King with Princess Sophia Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz — Episode of the Duke of Roxburgh and Princess Christina — Marriage by Proxy at Mecklenburg — Simple Manners of the Mecklenburg Court — Preparations in England — Landing of the Princess Charlotte at Harwich — Enthusiastic Reception by the Populace in London — Wedding at Midnight in St. James's Palace — Antiquated Nuptial Observances — Letter of George III. to the King of Prussia — The Coronation in Westminster Abbey — Incidents and Omens of the Splendid Ceremonial.

In the meantime, the king, disappointed in his hopes of sharing his throne with Lady Sarah Lennox, began to seek in other quarters for a suitable consort. Accordingly, one Colonel David Græme, or Graham, was confidentially instructed by him to visit the different Protestant courts of Germany, for the purpose of reporting on the relative mental and personal accomplishments of the various unmarried princesses to whom he might succeed in obtaining an introduction. Græme would seem to have discharged his delicate mission with singular tact and judgment. The princess who pleased him most, and who was thus indebted to him for a sceptre, was Sophia Charlotte, youngest daughter of Lewis Frederick,

Duke of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, at this time in her eighteenth year.

The favourable report of the princess's person and disposition, which Græme transmitted to St. James's, was subsequently confirmed by the result of inquiries in other quarters; and accordingly he received orders to place in the hands of the Duchess of Mecklenburg a letter from the Princess Dowager of Wales, containing a demand on the part of the King of Great Britain for the hand of her daughter. The proposal, as may be supposed, was unhesitatingly and gratefully accepted.[1]

[1] Colonel David Græme had formerly not only been a staunch Jacobite, but had been deeply implicated in the plots to restore the house of Stuart to the throne. Alluding to this circumstance, on his return, Hume, the historian, wittily congratulated him on having exchanged the dangerous employment of making kings, for the more lucrative trade of making queens. Of the personal history of Colonel Græme, almost as little appears to be known as of the qualifications which led to his being selected to conduct this peculiarly delicate mission. Shortly after the arrival of the young queen in England, Rigby writes to the Duke of Bedford: "Eleven new regiments are ordered to be raised; Grahame, the queen's secretary, to have one." His subsequent commissions bore date: Major-General, July 10, 1763; Lieutenant-General, May 26, 1772; and General, February 9, 1783. In 1761 he was appointed secretary to Queen Charlotte, and in 1765 controller of her household; both of which appointments he held till 1774. The Rev. A. Carlyle, who was thrown into General Græme's society in 1769, intimates that he was at that time partially under a cloud at court, on account of "tampering with her Majesty, and using political freedoms which were not long afterward the cause of his disgrace. Colonel Graham," he continues, "was a shrewd and sensible man; but the queen's favour and his prosperity had made him arrogant and presump-

One untoward incident, only, ruffled the even tenor of the negotiation. John, Duke of Roxburgh, in the course of his travels, had chanced to pay a visit to Mecklenburg, where he had fallen in love with the Princess Christina, the elder sister of the future Queen of England. As the duke was handsome, graceful, accomplished, and only in his twenty-first year, it was natural that the young princess should return his affection; and accordingly, but for the inopportune arrival of Græme, their mutual predilection for each other would in all probability have ended in marriage. Unhappily, it was one of the conditions stipulated for by the court of St. James's, that the sister of the destined Queen of England should on no account unite herself to a British subject, and consequently the lovers were compelled to forego the happiness which they had promised themselves. It may be mentioned that the princess and the duke both died unmarried.[1]

With so much secrecy had the negotiations for the king's marriage been conducted that, with the

tuous, and he blew himself up. Not long after this time he lost his office near the queen, and retired into obscurity in Scotland for the rest of his days." General Græme died in 1797.

[1] John, third Duke of Roxburgh, from whose "Bibliotheca" the Roxburgh Club afterward took its rise, was born in 1740. His attachment to the Princess Christina is mentioned in the newspapers of the day. He afterward became a great favourite with George the Third, was appointed a lord of the bedchamber in 1767, and groom of the stole in 1796. He died on the 19th of March, 1804.

exception of the princess dowager and Lord Bute, there was perhaps no individual in England who suspected that such an event was in contemplation. At length, however, at the commencement of July, the interesting secret was confidentially communicated by Lord Bute to the Dukes of Bedford and Newcastle, Lord Hardwicke, and Mr. Pitt. To the Duke of Bedford, Bute writes, on the 3d of that month: "The very great regard I have for your Grace has made me quite uneasy till I obtained his Majesty's permission to communicate to you the business of the council to which your Grace is summoned on Wednesday next. I do it, my lord, under the seal of the strictest secrecy. The king intends that day to declare his resolution of taking a consort to his bed. The lady pitched upon to be our future queen is the Princess Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz; one whose character appears everything we could wish, and that not taken upon very slight grounds." The council referred to by Lord Bute had been summoned for the 8th of July, for the despatch of "the most urgent and important business;" and accordingly, on that day, — to the surprise of most of the members, who had anticipated the discussion of graver topics than a marriage, — the king apprised them that his hand had been accepted by a foreign princess, and that the youngest daughter of the house of Mecklenburg-Strelitz was to be their queen. "Perhaps," writes Walpole, "there were

not six men in England who knew that such a princess existed." Again, Walpole writes: "The handerchief has been tossed a vast way. It is to a Charlotte, Princess of Mecklenburg. Lord Harcourt is to be at her father's court, if he can find it, on the 1st of August, and the coronation of both their Majesties is fixed for the 22d of September."

It was not till the negotiations for the hand of the princess had been entirely completed, that she was made acquainted with the brilliant destiny which awaited her, and then under circumstances of considerable interest, which, a few years afterward, she herself related to an accomplished lady for whom she entertained a high esteem and regard. "In the latter years of Queen Charlotte's life," writes the lady referred to,[1] "I used often to spend some days at the castle, and in one

[1] Sophia, wife of Dr. William Stuart, Archbishop of Armagh, fifth son of John, Earl of Bute. "My mother," writes her son, William Stuart, Esq., who has most kindly allowed the author to avail himself of her very interesting reminiscences, "My mother, who was the daughter of Thomas and Lady Juliana Penn, and granddaughter of the founder of Pennsylvania, was at an early age associated with the court of George the Third, in consequence of her aunt, the Lady Charlotte Finch, being governess of the royal children; and her subsequent marriage with my father, who was the younger son of John, Earl of Bute, the favourite minister of George the Third, again brought her in contact with the most celebrated persons of her time." — The occasional extracts from Mrs. Stuart's Reminiscences, which will be met with in these pages, will, for the sake of brevity, be distinguished as "Stuart MSS."

of these visits heard her Majesty describe her own wedding. She described her life at Mecklenburg as one of extreme retirement. They dressed only *en robe de chambre*, except on Sundays, on which day she put on her best gown, and after service, which was very long, took an airing in the coach and six, attended by guards and all the state she could muster. She had not 'dined at table' at the period I am speaking of. One morning, her eldest brother, of whom she seems to have stood in great awe, came to her room in company with the duchess, her mother. He told her to prepare her best clothes, for they were to have *grand couvert* to receive an ambassador from the King of England, and that she should for the first time dine with them. He added: 'You will sit next him at dinner: mind what you say, and *ne faites pas l'enfant*,' —a favourite expression of his, —'and try to amuse him, and show him that you are not a fool.' She then asked her mother if she was to put on her blue tabby, '*et mes bijoux?*' '*Mon enfant*,' said the duchess, '*tu n'en as point.*' And the queen produced her garnet earrings, which were strings of beads sewn on a plate, about the size of a half-crown, and were then in fashion; but which, as she said, a housemaid of these days would despise. Thus attired, she followed her mother into the saloon, and Mr. Drummond was introduced to her. To her great surprise, her brother led her out first, which she supposed he did because it was

her first appearance. Mr. Drummond sat at her right hand. She asked him about his journey, and of England, and then added: 'On me dit que votre roi est très extrêmement beau et très aimable,' which seemed to raise a smile both in him and the duke. A little frightened, she next added: 'Apparemment vous êtes venu demander la Princesse de Prusse. On dit qu'elle est très belle et qu'elle sera votre reine?' 'Je demande pardon à votre Altesse; je n'ai aucune commission pour cela.' And the smiles were so striking that she had not courage to open her lips again. In a few minutes, however, the folding-doors flew open to the saloon, which she saw splendidly illuminated; and there appeared a table, two cushions, and everything prepared for a wedding. Her brother then gave her his hand; and leading her in, used his favourite expression: 'Allons, ne faites pas l'enfant, — tu vas être Reine d'Angleterre.' Mr. Drummond then advanced. They knelt down. The ceremony, whatever it was, proceeded. She was laid on the sofa, upon which he laid his foot;[1] and they all

[1] Either this must have been in jest, which at a stiff court and on a solemn occasion is very unlikely to have been the case, or otherwise it would seem to have been a modest substitute for the vicarious ceremonial, anciently practised at espousals by proxy, of the representative of the bridegroom introducing his leg into the bride's bed. For an illustration of this remarkable rite see Lord Bacon's account of the marriage by proxy of the Arch-Duke Maximilian with Anne, heiress of Bretagne. "She was not only publicly contracted, but stated as a bride, and solemnly bedded; and, after she was laid, there came in Maximilian's

embraced her, calling her '*la reine.*' Mr. Drummond then gave her a magnificent *écrin* of diamonds, one jewel of which was a little crown which I have often seen her wear. The evening passed in admiring the jewels and putting them on. She declared from that moment she saw and knew nothing, and was quite bewildered. Mr. Drummond pressed for immediate departure. She begged for one week, that she might take leave of every person and spot, and particularly of her mother, of whom she was very fond. She told me that she ran about from morning till night, visiting the poor, and in particular a small garden with medical herbs, common fruit, and flowers, which she cultivated mostly herself, and exclusively for the use and comfort of the poor, to whom, she said, a nosegay or a little fruit were more acceptable than food. And wherever she lived she had a garden made for this purpose. She kept poultry also for the same object. When the day for her departure came, she set out for the seacoast accompanied by her mother, who consigned her to the hands of the Duchess of Ancaster and Lady Effingham; and she spoke of the agony of that parting, even after so many years, in a manner that showed what it must have been. Her mother was in bad

ambassador with letters of procuration; and, in the presence of sundry noble personages, men and women, put his leg, stripped naked to the knee, between the espousal-sheets, to the end that the ceremony might amount to a consummation."

health, but promised to come over in the spring, which, however, she never lived to fulfil." "She was an excellent French scholar," according to the same high authority; "well read in her own language; wrote a very pretty hand; played on the guitar and piano, or rather spinette, having learned of Bach, and sung very sweetly and correctly. She also danced a very fine minuet, the dance of the day; had a lovely complexion, fine hair and teeth, and the neatest *petite* figure, with a peculiar elegance."

In the meantime, the preparations in England for the approaching nuptials were proceeding with as little delay as possible. The king's former governor, Lord Harcourt, was despatched to Mecklenburg to make the usual formal demand for the hand of the princess. The Duchess of Ancaster, the Duchess of Hamilton, and the Countess of Effingham were selected to conduct her to England. The royal yacht, which was to convey her across the Channel, was repainted, redecorated, and renamed the *Charlotte*. "Will not her stomach be turned by the paint of the vessel?" asked some one of Horace Walpole. "If her head is not turned," he replied, "she may compound for anything else." "Think," he writes to Sir Horace Mann, "of the crown of England and a handsome young king dropping from the clouds into Strelitz! The crowds, the multitudes that are to stare at her!

The swarms to kiss her hand! The pomp of the coronation! She need be seventeen to bear it!"

Although the king's thoughts are said to have been still straying toward Lady Sarah Lennox, he nevertheless displayed a becoming impatience to behold and embrace his future consort. On the 1st of August the Duke of Newcastle writes to Lord Hardwicke: "Lord Harcourt sets out this day; Lord Anson goes the middle of next week. His Majesty seems highly pleased, and showed me the present he has sent the princess by my Lord Harcourt, of his own picture, richly and most prettily set around with diamonds, and a diamond rose." A week afterward, Lord Hardwicke writes to his son, Lord Royston: "The king is got extremely well, and in haste for his new queen. He has given Lord Anson, who went away on Thursday evening for Harwich, a paper of instructions, — a full sheet, — all writ with his own hand." Again, Lord Hardwicke writes to Lord Royston, on the 22d of August: "As to our future queen, they are in daily expectation of her. She was to embark at Stade yesterday. Her future progress will depend on the wind, which, as it is in London, is at present contrary; but that is not always a rule to judge what it is at sea. Some are so hasty as to make her land on Monday, others on Tuesday or Wednesday. The king intends to meet her at Greenwich, and to go only with his usual at-

tendants, without any extraordinary parade. The Duke of Devonshire, as lord chamberlain, goes as far as Gravesend. His Grace told me yesterday that his Majesty said to him: 'Nobody shall kiss her hand till she is queen except my lord chamberlain, and you must, when you first see her.' His Grace told me further, that it is expected that all peers, peeresses, and privy councillors shall be at St. James's to walk at the wedding, which is to be the first night. I thought to have excused myself from the crowd on the wedding night, but fear I must be an old beau at that ceremony."

Lord Harcourt, on his arrival at Mecklenburg, seems to have been not only satisfied, but even charmed, with the person and manners of his destined queen. To Sir Andrew Mitchell he writes, on the 17th of August: "Our queen, that is to be, has seen very little of the world, but her very good sense, vivacity, and cheerfulness, I dare say, will recommend her to the king and make her the darling of the British nation. She is no regular beauty; but she is of a very pretty size, has a charming complexion, very pretty eyes, and [is] finely made. In short, she is a very fine girl."

Not since the time when a still younger bride, Henrietta Maria of France, had passed up the Thames amidst the waving of banners and the roaring of the Tower guns had the river been

more crowded with pleasure-boats, or the barges and the banks of the river been more densely thronged with spectators, than was the case on the 7th of September, the day on which the royal yacht was expected to make its appearance off Greenwich. The public, however, was destined to be disappointed. In the course of the afternoon, it became known that the yacht had entered Harwich road, and that, in consequence of the tempestuous state of the weather, the princess intended to disembark at that place. Unfortunately, the voyage from Cuxhaven to Harwich had proved a most unpropitious one. For ten days, owing to adverse and violent gales, the royal yacht had been baffled in its attempts to make an English harbour. At one time it was in danger of being driven on the coast of Norway. The Duchesses of Ancaster and Hamilton, both of them invalids, had suffered agonies from seasickness. The princess, however, was only slightly indisposed, and then scarcely for half an hour. During the voyage she maintained her usual gaiety, sometimes talking freely with the officers, but principally amusing herself with playing English tunes upon her harpsichord. "They had a most hazardous voyage," continues Mrs. Stuart, in her charming narrative, "and at one time feared not making England; but while the other ladies were crying, she was undaunted; consoled them, prayed, sang Luther's hymns,

and, when the tempest a little subsided, played 'God Save the King' to her guitar. This I learned from Lady Effingham. I asked her if it was true? She simply said, 'Yes;' that she felt God had not singled her out for nothing; but that if she did perish, his mercy allowed it to save her greater trials." [1]

It was on the 7th of September that the illustrious lady, who, for nearly sixty years to come, was destined to set an example of piety and virtue to the people of this country, first set her foot upon British soil. The first night of her journey was passed at Witham, the seat of James, Earl of Abercorn, a nobleman whose reserve and silence were such that, according to Walpole, the princess must have imagined herself destined to rule over a realm of taciturnity. Walpole elsewhere speaks of Witham as the "Palace of Silence." At twelve o'clock on the following day the princess resumed her journey. A stranger in a foreign land, and destined to be married, the same night, to a man whom she had never set eyes upon, her feelings may be more readily imagined than described. At Romford she was met by the royal coaches, into one of which she was handed with the Duchesses of Ancaster and Hamilton. She was dressed, we

[1] "*Les reines ne se noyent pas*," was the calm remark of Queen Henrietta Maria when in similar danger from a tempest at sea.

are told, in the English fashion; in a fly cap with rich laced lappets, a stomacher ornamented with diamonds, and a gold brocade suit with a white ground. "On the road," writes Walpole, "they wanted her to curl her *toupet*. She said she thought it looked as well as that of any of the ladies sent to fetch her. If the king bid her, she would wear a periwig; otherwise she would remain as she was." According to Queen Charlotte's own account in later years, "she was much amused at the crowds of people assembled to see her, and bowed as she passed. She was hideously dressed in a blue satin quilted jesuit, which came up to her chin, and down to her waist; her hair twisted up into knots called a *tête de mouton*, and the strangest little blue coif on the top. She had a great jewel like a *Sévigné*, and earrings like those worn now with many drops, a present from the Empress of Russia, who knew of her marriage before she did herself."

Passing through Islington and along the New Road, the royal carriages entered Hyde Park from Oxford Street, and from thence proceeded down Constitution Hill, to St. James's Palace. The mass of persons who flocked to bid her welcome was enormous. "The noise," writes Walpole, "of coaches, chaises, horsemen, mob, that have been to see her pass through the parks, is so prodigious, that I cannot distinguish the guns. I am going to be dressed, and before seven shall

be launched into the crowd." The acclamations of the populace were gracefully acknowledged by the young princess. Observing the eagerness of the people to catch a view of her person, she desired that the postilions might be directed to drive at a slower pace. It was not till she caught a sight of the gloomy walls of St. James's Palace, that a slight tremour passed over her frame. Perceiving the beautiful Duchess of Hamilton smiling at her fears, "You may laugh," she said; "you have been married twice; but to me it is no joke." [1]

It was a quarter past three o'clock when the princess reached St. James's. At the garden gate of the palace she was met by the king's brother, the Duke of York, who handed her from the carriage. As she gave him her hand, it was remarked that her lips trembled; yet she alighted with apparent alacrity. In the garden she was received by the king, who, anticipating an attempt on her part to kneel and kiss his hand, gallantly embraced her and then led her into the palace, where he introduced her to the princess dowager and his sister, the Princess Augusta. While she

[1] Elizabeth Gunning, widow of James, sixth Duke of Hamilton, was at this period the wife of John, Lord Lorn, afterward fifth Duke of Argyle. During her widowhood, this beautiful woman had refused the hand of a third duke, — the Duke of Bridgewater. At a later period her charms and her coquetries are said to have afforded grounds for jealousy and uneasiness to the queen.

was dressing for dinner, one of her ladies happening to remark that the king preferred some particular mode of dress, "Let him dress himself," she replied; "I shall dress as I please." Being told that the king liked keeping early hours, she replied that she had no partiality for them, adding, "*qu'elle ne voulait pas se coucher avec les poules.*" At dinner the royal party consisted, besides herself, of the king, the princess dowager, and the Princess Augusta.

The queen's own account of her arrival at St. James's is curious and interesting. "Just," she said, "as they entered Constitution Hill, one of the ladies said to the other, looking at her watch, 'We shall hardly have time to dress for the wedding.' 'Wedding!' said the queen. 'Yes, madam, it is to be at twelve.' Upon this she fainted. Lady Effingham, who had a bottle of lavender-water in her hand, threw it in her face, and the carriage almost immediately stopped at the garden gate of St. James's Palace. Here stood the king, surrounded by his court. A crimson cushion was laid for her to kneel upon,[1]

[1] This mention of the cushion is curious, as showing that, although the king gallantly refused to allow his betrothed to kneel to him, still ancient custom and etiquette had not been dispensed with. The last two foreign princesses who had arrived in this country to be married to kings of England, were Henrietta Maria and Catherine of Braganza. Of these ladies, we find the former permitted to kneel to Charles the First, on the occasion of his first meeting her at Dover; the king, how-

and mistaking the hideous old Duke of Grafton for him, as the cushion inclined that way, she was very near prostrating herself before the duke; but the king caught her in his arms first, and all but carried her up-stairs, forbidding any one to enter. Here she found breakfast, which she much needed, and, looking up, saw a very different face from the black old duke.[1] From this moment, she said, she never knew real sorrow until his illness."

In the meantime, those who had been appointed to figure in the nuptial procession began to assemble in the royal apartments. When desired to kiss the peeresses, the princess seemed to be pleased, but, at the sight of the bridesmaids, looked somewhat disconcerted. "*Mon Dieu,*" she said, "*il y en a tant; il y en a tant!*" "The king," writes Walpole, "looked very handsome, and talked to her continually, with great

ever, raising her, "wrapping her up in his arms, and kissing her with many kisses." With regard to Catherine of Braganza, as she was in bed when Charles the Second first saw her on her landing at Portsmouth, "by reason," as he writes to Lord Clarendon, "of a little cough and some inclination to a fever," her case of course affords no second precedent. This allusion to Charles's first interview with his future consort, reminds us of a well-known saying of his to Colonel Legge, that he thought they had brought him a bat instead of a woman. Not less insulting was his remark of German princesses, that he could not marry one of them, — "they were all foggy."

[1] This is apparently an error. The Duke of Grafton of this time, Augustus Henry, afterward prime minister, was only in his twenty-sixth year.

good-humour. It does not promise as if they two would be the most unhappy persons in England."

Between nine and ten o'clock at night the procession began to move toward the chapel royal. The bride was preceded by the peeresses and the unmarried daughters of peers. The king's brothers, the Duke of York and Prince William, walked one on each side of her. The king's uncle, the Duke of Cumberland, gave her away. "The queen," writes Walpole, "was in white and silver. An endless mantle of violet-coloured velvet — lined with ermine and attempted to be fastened on her shoulder by a bunch of huge pearls — dragged itself, and almost the rest of her clothes, half-way down her waist. On her head was a beautiful little tiara of diamonds, worth three score thousand pounds, which she is to wear at the coronation." Walpole elsewhere writes: "She looks very sensible, cheerful, and is remarkably genteel. Her tiara of diamonds was very pretty, her stomacher sumptuous; her violet velvet mantle and ermine so heavy that the spectators knew as much of her upper half as the king himself. This inconvenient train was supported by the bridesmaids, ten in number, who were dressed in robes of white and silver, with diamond coronets on their heads. They consisted of Lady Sarah Lennox, Lady Caroline Russell, Lady Caroline Montagu, Lady Harriot Bentinck, Lady Anne

Hamilton, Lady Essex Kerr, Lady Elizabeth Keppel, Lady Louisa Greville, Lady Elizabeth Harcourt, and Lady Susan Fox Strangways. "Lady Caroline Russell," writes Walpole, "is extremely handsome, Lady Elizabeth Keppel very pretty; but nothing ever looked so charming as Lady Sarah Lennox." The marriage ceremony was performed by Doctor Secker, Archbishop of Canterbury, by whom the king had been baptised, and by whom he was subsequently crowned.

At the termination of the marriage ceremony the guests returned to the drawing-room at St. James's, where the royal family remained for about ten minutes. They then retired to a more private apartment, where, supper not being quite ready, the queen sat down to the harpsichord, and sang and played till it was announced. Owing, apparently, to her timidity, it was not till between three and four o'clock in the morning that the royal party manifested any sign of breaking up, when the Duke of Cumberland having plainly intimated that the Princess Augusta and himself were becoming completely overpowered by sleep, the young queen took the hint, and expressed her readiness to retire to rest. She had previously stipulated that no one should accompany her to her dressing-room but the princess dowager and her two German waiting-women, and also that no other person should

be admitted to the nuptial chamber but the king.[1]

On the following day the king held a levee. To Lord Hardwicke he happened to remark that it was "a very fine day." "Yes, sir," said the old ex-chancellor, "and it was a very fine night." Even Lord Bute, despite his natural pomposity, indulged in a jest with his sovereign. His daughter, Lady Margaret Stuart, had been married, on the preceding day, to Sir James Lowther, afterward the first Earl of Lonsdale.[2] "My Lord Oxford," said Lord Bute to the king, "has laid a bet that your Majesty will be a father before Sir James." "Tell my Lord Oxford," said the king, "that I shall be glad to go him halves." It may be mentioned that had the king's offer been accepted, he would have been the winner. After the levee, the queen, standing under the canopy of the throne, held a drawing-room. The ladies were presented to her by the Duchess of Hamilton; the men by the Duke of Manchester. At night

[1] No doubt the object of the young queen was to avoid the license which was formerly permitted even in the bridal chambers of royalty. The last occasion in England on which the company appear to have been admitted to see the bride and bridegroom in bed on the night of their nuptials, was at the subsequent marriage, on the 18th of May, 1797, of the queen's own daughter, the princess royal, to the hereditary Prince of Wirtemburg. The late King William the Fourth, who was present at his sister's wedding, used to relate the fact.

[2] Sir James Lowther, afterward first Earl of Lonsdale, died May 24th, 1802, without issue.

there was a court ball. On the 10th of September she again held a drawing-room, and on the Monday — seated on the throne and surrounded by her bridesmaids — she received the address of the lord mayor and aldermen of London.

THE KING TO THE KING OF PRUSSIA.

"MONSIEUR MON FRÈRE : — Ayant trouvé convenable de demander en mariage la Sérénissime Princesse Charlotte, sœur de mon cousin le Duc de Mecklenburg-Strelitz, et mes noces avec cette princesse s'en étant ensuivies par la célébration qui s'en est faite dans la chapelle de ma cour le 8e de ce mois, je m'empresse de faire part d'un événement aussi important à votre Majesté ; et je suis persuadé d'avance que l'heureuse réussite, et conclusion d'une affaire qui intéresse autant que le fait ce mariage, tant mon propre bonheur, que celui de mes fidèles sujets, ne sauroit être vû d'un œil indifférent par votre Majesté. Mon attention invariable à cultiver la plus étroite amitié et union avec elle, me répond d'un retour sincère de sa part ; ne doutant donc aucunement, que vous ne preniez un véritable intérêt à une nouvelle aussi joyeuse, je l'annonce avec une satisfaction particulière à votre Majesté ; et comme il n'y a rien qui me tienne plus à cœur que votre prospérité, et celle de votre famille, je vous recommande très instamment à

la Providence divine, étant toujours avec les sentimens d'une parfaite amitié,

"Monsieur mon Frère,

"De votre Majesté

"le bon Frère,

"GEORGE R.

"*À St. James's, ce 10e Septembre*, 1761."

Though the queen was short in stature, and her figure thinner than it might have been, she was not ill made. The paleness of her face was set off to advantage by her silken and dark-brown hair, and though her mouth was somewhat large, still a good set of teeth, and a countenance charmingly expressive of good-nature and good sense, made amends for the want of positive beauty. In addition to these latter qualities, her affability, and lively and graceful manner, left a very pleasing impression on all who approached her person. "She is not tall nor a beauty," writes Walpole. "Pale and very thin; but looks sensible, and is genteel. Her hair is darkish and fine; her forehead low, her nose very well, except the nostrils spreading too wide. Her mouth has the same fault, but her teeth are good. She talks a good deal, and French tolerably." "I hear," writes Mrs. Montagu, "the queen has a most amiable disposition, and I believe one may say in vulgar phrase they will be a happy couple."

The coronation of the king and queen took place

on the 22d of September, a fortnight after their marriage. Never shone a more beautiful morn on seas of heads, on tapestried balconies, on glittering troops, on waving plumes and blazoned heraldry. Thousands of persons slept all night in the open air, and all London poured forth to greet their young king and his gentle consort. That part of the ceremony which took place in Westminster Abbey passed off with its usual solemnity and more than its usual tediousness. But when, later in the day, the king and queen entered the great hall of William Rufus, — when, at their entrance, a thousand lights, as if by enchantment, suddenly illuminated the colossal banqueting-room of the Norman kings, — when the eye fell upon long galleries filled with gorgeous beauty, on peers and peeresses robed in velvet and ermine, on the plumed hats of the Knights of the Bath, on the judges in their scarlet robes, and on prelates in their vestments, on pursuivants and heralds, — then, indeed, was presented as magnificent a spectacle as the mind can well imagine. "The instant the queen's canopy entered," writes Gray, the poet, "fire was given to all the lustres at once by trains of prepared flax that reached from one to the other. To me it seemed an interval of not half a minute before the whole was in a blaze of splendour. It is true that for that half-minute it rained fire upon the heads of all the spectators, the flax falling in large flakes; and the ladies,

queen and all, were in no small terror, but no mischief ensued. It was out as soon as it fell, and the most magnificent spectacle I ever beheld remained. The king, bowing to the lords as he passed, with his crown on his head and the sceptre and orb in his hands, took his place with great majesty and grace. So did the queen with her crown, sceptre, and rod. Then supper was served on gold plate. The Earl Talbot, Duke of Bedford, and Earl of Effingham, in their robes, all three on horseback, prancing and curveting like the hobby-horses in the 'Rehearsal,' ushered in the courses to the foot of the *haut-pas*. Between the courses, the champion performed his part with applause. The Earl of Denbigh carved for the king; the Earl of Holderness for the queen."

There, too, looking down from one of the galleries, sat one who, in a disguised habit and with his face half concealed, was no unconcerned spectator of that brilliant scene. This person was no other than the young hero of Preston Pans and Falkirk; he who had rendered himself the idol of the rude and devoted Highlanders; he who, by the right of legitimate descent, was entitled to sit upon that very throne which he now had the mortification to behold occupied by another. The fact of Charles Edward having been present at the coronation of George the Third was related by Earl Marischal to Hume, the historian, only a few

days after the ceremony had taken place. "I asked my lord," says Hume, "the reason for this strange fact. 'Why,' says he, 'a gentleman told me that saw him there, and that he even spoke to him, and whispered in his ear these words, "Your Royal Highness is the last of all mortals whom I should expect to see here." "It was curiosity that led me," said the other; but I assure you," added he, "that the person who is the object of all this pomp and magnificence is the person I envy the least."' You see, this story is so nearly traced from the fountainhead, as to wear a great face of probability. What if the Pretender had taken up Dymock's gauntlet?"

"The king's whole behaviour at the coronation," writes Bishop Newton, "was justly admired and commended by every one, and particularly his manner of ascending and seating himself on his throne after his coronation. No actor in the character of Pyrrhus, in the 'Distressed Mother,'[1] — not even Booth himself, who was celebrated for it in the *Spectator*, — ever ascended the throne with so much grace and dignity. There was another particular which those only could observe who sat near the communion table, as did the prebendaries of Westminster. When the king ap-

[1] A once popular tragedy by Ambrose Philips, first acted at Drury Lane in 1712. This was the "new tragedy" to which Sir Roger de Coverley is represented to have been carried by the *Spectator*.

proached the communion table, in order to receive the sacrament, he inquired of the archbishop whether he should not lay aside his crown. The archbishop asked the Bishop of Rochester, but neither of them knew or could say what had been the usual form. The king determined within himself that humility best became such a solemn act of devotion, and took off his crown and laid it down during the administration," "His countenance," writes Mrs. Montagu, who saw the king pass from the abbey to the hall, "expressed a benevolent joy in the vast concourse of people and their loud acclamations, but there was not the least air of pride or insolent exultation. In the religious offices his Majesty behaved with the greatest reverence and deepest attention. He pronounced with earnest solemnity his engagement to his people, and when he was to receive the sacrament he pulled off his crown. How happy that in the day of the greatest worldly pomp he should remember his duty to the King of kings!" According to the same authority, the king's knowledge of precedents and his retentive memory enabled him more than once during the day to set, not only the peers, but the heralds right, in the exercise of their respective duties, "which he did with great good-humour."

Horace Walpole, who was a spectator of the coronation of George the Third, has also described the scene in one of the most graphic of his charm-

ing letters. "For the coronation," he writes, "if a puppet-show could be worth a million, that is. The multitudes, balconies, guards, and processions, made Palace Yard the liveliest spectacle in the world. The hall was the most glorious. The blaze of lights, the richness and variety of habits, the ceremonial, the benches of peers and peeresses, frequent and full, was as awful as a pageant can be; and yet, for the king's sake and my own, I never wish to see another." "My Lady Harrington," continues Walpole, "covered with all the diamonds she could borrow, hire, or seize, and with the air of Roxana, was the finest figure at a distance. She complained to George Selwyn that she was to walk with Lady Portsmouth, who would have a wig and a stick. 'Pho,' said he, 'you will only look as if you were taken up by the constable.' She told this everywhere, thinking the reflection was on my Lady Portsmouth. Lady Pembroke, alone, at the head of the countesses, was the picture of majestic modesty; the Duchess of Richmond, as pretty as nature and dress, with no pains of her own, could make her; Lady Spencer, Lady Sutherland, and Lady Northampton, very pretty figures; Lady Kildare, still beauty itself, if not a little too large. The ancient peeresses were by no means the worst party; Lady Westmoreland, still handsome, and with more dignity than all; the Duchess of Queensbury looked well, though her locks milk-white;

Lady Albemarle, very genteel; nay, the middle age had some good representatives in Lady Holderness, Lady Rochford, and Lady Strafford, the perfectest little figure of all.[1] My Lady Suffolk ordered her robes, and I dressed part of her head, as I made some of my Lord Hertford's dress; for, you know, no profession comes amiss to me, from a tribune of the people to a habit-maker. Do not imagine that there were not figures as excellent on the other side: old Exeter, who told the king he was the handsomest man she ever saw, old Effingham, and a Lady Say and Seale, with her hair powdered and her tresses black, were an excellent contrast to the handsome. Lord B— put on rouge upon his wife and the Duchess of Bedford in the Painted Chamber; the Duchess of Queensbury told me of the latter, that she looked like an orange-peach, half red and half yellow. The coronets of the peers and their robes disguised them strangely. It required all the beauty of the Dukes of Richmond and Marlborough to make

[1] Two days afterward, Gray, the poet, writes to the Rev. J. Brown: "The noblest and most graceful figures among the ladies were the Marchioness of Kildare, Viscountess Spencer, Countesses of Harrington, Pembroke, and Strafford, and the Duchess of Richmond. Of the older sort, — for there is a grace that belongs to age, too, — the Countess of Westmoreland, Countess of Albemarle, and Duchess of Queensbury." "The ladies," writes Mrs. Montagu, "made a glorious appearance. Wherever there was any beauty of countenance, or shape, or air, they were all heightened by the dress. Lady Talbot was a fine figure."

them noticed. One there was, though of another species, the noblest figure I ever saw, the high constable of Scotland, Lord Errol. As one saw him in a space capable of containing him, one admired him. At the wedding, dressed in tissue, he looked like one of the giants in Guildhall, new gilt. It added to the energy of his person, that one considered him acting so considerable a part in that very hall, where, so few years ago, one saw his father, Lord Kilmarnock, condemned to the block. The champion acted his part admirably, and dashed down his gauntlet with proud defiance. His associates, Lord Effingham, Lord Talbot, and the Duke of Bedford, were woeful." [1] It may be mentioned that the white horse on which the champion rode into Westminster Hall was the same which George the Second had ridden at the battle of Dettingen.

During the day there occurred one or two trifling incidents which disturbed the equanimity of the great officers of the household. For in-

[1] "Of the men," writes Gray, "doubtless the noblest and most striking figure was the Earl of Errol, and after him the Dukes of Ancaster, Richmond, Marlborough, Kingston; Earls of Northampton, Pomfret, Viscount Weymouth, etc." James, Earl of Errol, was the eldest son of the unfortunate Earl of Kilmarnock, who, only fifteen years previously, had been tried by his peers in that very hall and sent from thence to the scaffold on Tower Hill. The father suffered on the scaffold on the 18th August, 1746, at the age of forty-one. The son died on the 3d of July, 1778, at the age of fifty-two.

stance, in the hall, no chairs of state had been provided for the king and queen; the sword of state had been forgotten, and that of the lord mayor had to be borrowed for the occasion. When the king complained of these omissions to the deputy earl marshal, the Earl of Effingham, "It is true, sir," was his lordship's blundering reply, "that there has been some neglect, but I have taken care that the next coronation shall be regulated in the exactest manner possible." Instead of being offended by the remark, the king insisted on the earl's repeating it several times for his amusement. A similar awkward observation had formerly been made by the beautiful Lady Coventry to George the Second. "The only sight," she said, "which she was eager to see was a coronation." The old king laughed heartily, and at supper repeated the story in high good-humour to the royal family.

The individual who would seem to have been the most to blame for the mishaps which took place at the coronation was the lord steward of the household, William, Earl Talbot. Of this nobleman little more need be said than that he was a man of pleasure and a patron of pugilists, distinguished as much by personal strength and beauty, as by his swaggering manners and rude demeanour. Having recently, to the great dissatisfaction of the equerries and maids of honour, introduced a sweeping system of economy into the

royal household, he appears to have deemed it his duty to carry out the same parsimonious principle at the coronation. Accordingly, at the great banquet in Westminster Hall, the Knights of the Bath, the aldermen of the city of London, and the barons of the Cinque Ports, severally found themselves deprived of the tables which it had been usual to provide for them on such occasions. "To us," said Sir William Stanhope, a Knight of the Bath, "it is an affront, for some of us are gentlemen." The aldermen were indignant in the extreme. "We have invited the king," said Alderman Beckford, "to a banquet which will cost us ten thousand pounds, and yet, when we come to court, we are to be given nothing to eat." The argument was unanswerable, and a table was set apart for them. The barons of the Cinque Ports were less fortunate. "If you come to me," said Lord Talbot, "as lord steward, I tell you it is impossible; if as Lord Talbot, I am a match for any of you."[1]

[1] "Next," writes Gray, "I must tell you that the barons of the Cinque Ports, who by ancient right should dine at a table on the *haut-pas* at the right hand of the throne, found that no provision at all had been made for them, and, representing their case to Earl Talbot, he told them: 'Gentlemen, if you speak to me as high steward I must tell you there was no room for you; if as Lord Talbot, I am ready to give you satisfaction in any way you think fit.' They are several of them gentlemen of the best families: so this has bred ill blood. In the next place, the City of London found they had no table neither; but Beckford bullied my lord high steward till he was forced to give them that

Considering the unpopular character of this nobleman, it was only natural that a misadventure, which happened to him at the coronation, should have been witnessed with satisfaction. As lord high steward for the day, it had been part of his duty during the banquet to ride on horseback up to the dais, and, after having made his obeisance to the sovereign, to back his horse out of the hall. The animal, as a matter of course, had been trained for the purpose, and unfortunately had been trained only too well. To the great amusement of the spectators, and to the infinite discomfiture of the lord high steward, it persisted in entering the hall backwards; nor was it without much difficulty that it was prevented advancing with its hindquarters turned toward their Majesties.[1]

intended for the Knights of the Bath, and, instead of it, they dined at the entertainment prepared for the great officers."

[1] When, some time afterward, the celebrated John Wilkes made himself merry with this incident in the *North Briton*, Lord Talbot was so incensed as to challenge him to single combat. Wilkes was not the person to disappoint an adversary on such an occasion, and accordingly it was settled that on a certain evening they should sup together, with their seconds, at the Red Lion Inn, at Bagshot, with the view of fighting on the following morning. By the express desire, however, of Lord Talbot it was agreed that they should settle their differences at once. Accordingly after supper — the moon shining at the time with unusual brightness — they repaired with their seconds to the garden of the inn. Each fired a shot at the other; neither hitting his adversary. "Lord Talbot," writes Wilkes to his friend, Lord Temple, "desired that we might now be good friends and retire

One incident occurred at George the Third's coronation which occasioned some alarm to the superstitious. In Westminster Hall the finest of the royal jewels fell from the crown.[1]

"When first, portentous, it was known
Great George had jostled from his crown
The brightest diamond there,
The omen-mongers one and all
Foretold some mischief must befall;
Some loss beyond compare."

When, in 1782, the British crown was dispossessed of its proudest appanage, the North American colonies, there were many persons who eagerly called to mind the warning portent of 1761. Of course, in our time, there are few who will be inclined to attach any importance to the incident, yet it seems at least as well worth recording as Sir Edward Zouch's blunder on the death of James the First in proclaiming Charles the First at the "court gate" at Theobalds, not as the "indubitable," but dubitable heir to the throne;"[2] at least as curious as the well-known fact of the blood of the wounded falcon falling on Charles's famous bust by Bernini on its way to the palace of Whitehall; as the undoubted

to the inn to drink a bottle of claret together, which we did with great good humour and much laughter."

[1] Fortunately it was recovered.

[2] Howell was himself an inmate of Theobalds at the time of James the First's death and of the proclamation of his unfortunate successor.

incident of the gold head of that monarch's stick falling to the ground at his trial in Westminster Hall;[1] and lastly, as noteworthy as the strange circumstances of James the Second's crown not only tottering on his head at his coronation in Westminster Abbey, but that the person who prevented its falling off should have been Henry, the brother of the great patriot, Algernon Sidney. "It was not the first occasion," he said, "of his family having supported the crown." "I saw," writes an eye-witness of the latter incident, "the tottering of his [James's] crown upon his head, the broken canopy over it, and the rent flag hanging upon the White Tower over against my door, when I came home from the coronation. It was torn by the wind, at the same time the signal was given to the Tower that he was crowned. I put no great stress upon omens, but I cannot despise them. Most of them, I believe, come by chance, but come from some superior intellectual agents, especially those which regard the fate of kings and nations." From another contemporary, Archdeacon Echard, we learn that on this same day the royal arms, beautifully stained in glass, fell without any ascertainable cause from the windows of one of the principal London churches.

[1] King Charles himself related this fact to Bishop Juxon; adding that although he "seemed unconcerned," the incident "shocked him very much."

CHAPTER VII.

Changes in the Ministry — Mr. Pitt Recovers the Popular Favour — The King and Queen Dine at Guildhall, Where the King Meets a Cool Reception — Lord Bute Mobbed, and Mr. Pitt Cheered — Pitt's Views of the Bourbon "Family Compact" Found to Be Correct — War Declared against Spain — Unregretted Retirement of the Duke of Newcastle, Who Declines a Pension Offered Him by the King — Dangerous Illness of the King — Birth of a Prince, afterward George IV. — The King's Kindly Recollections of Eton School.

LET us turn for awhile from the incidents and frivolities of a court to more important and instructive events. Lord Bute, as we have seen, had accomplished the paramount object of his ambition. Pitt had ceased to be a minister of the Crown. The harpies and sycophants who clung to the favourite earl and his fortunes were loud in congratulating him on his ephemeral triumph. "I sincerely wish your lordship joy," writes Bubb Dodington, "of being delivered of a most impracticable colleague, his Majesty of a most imperious servant, and the country of a most dangerous minister." Dodington, six months previously, had been raised to the peerage by the title

of Baron Melcombe, an honour for which he had long been sighing in vain.[1]

"When for some time he'd sat at the Treasury Board,
And the clerks there with titles had tickled his ear,
From every day hearing himself called a lord
He begged of Sir Robert to make him a peer.
But in an ill hour —
For Walpole looked sour —
And said it was not in his will or his power.
'Do you think, sir, the king would advance such a scrub,
Or the peerage debase with the name of a Bubb?'"

At the same time that Pitt resigned the seals as secretary of state, Earl Temple also threw up his appointment of lord privy seal and retired with his illustrious brother-in-law into private life. Lord Temple was succeeded by John, Duke of Bedford; Pitt by a nobleman of Tory principles, Charles, Earl of Egremont. "It is difficult," says Walpole, speaking of Pitt's resignation, "to say which exulted most, France, Spain, or Lord Bute, for Mr. Pitt was the common enemy of all three." But of all men probably the Duke of Newcastle was the most elated. "I never," writes Sir George Colebrooke, in his MS. Memoirs, "saw the duke in higher spirits than after Mr. Pitt, thwarted by the Cabinet in his proposal of declaring war against Spain, had given notice of resignation." Blind to

[1] The patent, creating him Baron Melcombe of Melcombe Regis, in the county of Dorset, is dated in April, 1761. He died the following year.

every consideration except a pompous conception of his own importance, the intriguing old statesman was unable to perceive that his own disgrace was inevitably involved in the downfall of his dreaded colleague. Even a blunt speech made to him by Lord Talbot was unable to disturb his equanimity. "Do not," said the earl, "die for joy on the Monday, nor for fear on the Tuesday."

Mr. Pitt, in the meantime, had succeeded in recovering the popularity which his acceptance of a pension had partially lost him. In vain his enemies accused him of having betrayed his country for gold. In vain the lampooners, the pamphleteers, the caricaturists of the day — hounded on by Bute and his agents — pelted him with a pitiless storm of personal invective and abuse. The very virulence of their attacks promoted the reaction in his favour, while the hatred in which Bute was held rendered it complete. The middle and lower classes had not forgotten the glories and triumphs which Pitt had achieved for his country. They still remembered that he had been the minister of their choice.

If proof had been required by the king and Bute of Pitt's extraordinary hold on the affections of the people, it was amply furnished on the 9th of November, this year, on which day the young king and his newly married consort dined in state at Guildhall. It was the king's first visit to the city since his accession, and, being also "Lord Mayor's

Day," — the great pageantry-day of the citizens of London, — the streets were, as may be readily imagined, crowded almost to suffocation. Among the guests invited to the banquet were Pitt and Bute. The friends of the former never doubted but that his progress to Guildhall would prove an ovation; while the friends of Bute, on the other hand, trembled for his personal safety. Bute himself was only too well aware of the danger which he ran, and accordingly had consented to the hiring of a number of prize-fighters for the protection of his person, to and from the city. "My good lord," he writes to Lord Melcombe, "my situation, at all times perilous, has become much more so; for I am no stranger to the language held in this great city: 'Our darling's resignation is owing to Lord Bute, who might have prevented it with the king, and he must answer for all the consequences.'"

It was fortunate for Bute that, on the day of the great entertainment, it was not till his equipage had proceeded to within a quarter of a mile of Guildhall that it was identified. On Ludgate Hill it was mistaken for that of Mr. Pitt, and accordingly the courtier was greeted with the plaudits which were intended for the patriot. At St. Paul's, however, the crowd discovered its error. Suddenly a stentorian voice from the multitude exclaimed, "By G—, this is not Pitt. This is Bute, and be d——d to him!" A terrible out-

roar followed the announcement. Groans, hisses, yells, shouts of "No Scotch rogues! no Butes! no Newcastle salmon! Pitt for ever!" resounded from all sides. A rush was made at the coach. Not only the rich liveries of the coachmen and footmen, but the lace ruffles of the chancellor of the exchequer, Lord Barrington, who had the courage to accompany his friend, were bespattered with mud. The hired bruisers fought their best for their employer, but just as the coach was turning down King Street they were overpowered and driven back. The mob, thus victorious, now turned its whole attention toward Bute, who was, in fact, in a most critical situation. The leaders of the outrage were in the act of cutting the traces of the carriage; in a moment or two more he would probably have been dragged from it, when a large force of constables and peace officers rushed to his assistance. Even then it was with difficulty that they were able to escort him in safety into Guildhall; nor was it till after some time had elapsed, that he became sufficiently composed to enable him to face the company which was assembled in the reception-room. At night, he wisely accepted the lord chancellor's invitation to return with him in his state coach, and thus eluded the vigilant lookout of the rabble.

Soon after the equipage of Bute had entered the crowded streets, there appeared that of Pitt. The reception which he met with was very dif-

ferent from that which had greeted the recognition of his rival. As he passed along, seated in the same carriage with his brother-in-law, Lord Temple, handkerchiefs were waved from balconies and windows; the people applauded him "to the very echo;" many persons were seen forcing their way through the crowd, contented so long as they were able to shake hands with one of his footmen, or kiss the head of one of his horses. Lastly came the king. Anxious, as he ever was, to possess the affections of his subjects, the cold reception which they gave him must have been mortifying to him in the extreme. As the cumbrous gilt state coach [1]

[1] There may be persons to whom it may be interesting to be informed, that the present state coach of the sovereign was built in 1762, at no less an expense than £7,562 4*s*. 3*d*. Unwieldy and ridiculous-looking as it is, to the antiquary it presents a curious link between the cumbrous gilt equipages of the sixteenth century, and the light and simple carriages of our own time. But the state coach of the speaker of the House of Commons affords perhaps a still better specimen; containing, as it does, what was formerly called the boot, — the seat, or stool, facing each of the side windows, — on which, back to back, severally sit the speaker's chaplain and secretary. The vast size of the coaches of former days, and the number of persons they were capable of containing, are almost matters of astonishment. For instance, when Queen Elizabeth went to St. Paul's to return thanks for the defeat of the Spanish Armada, we find her seated "in a chariot-throne with four pillars behind to bear a canopy; on the top whereof was a crown imperial, and two lower pillars before, whereon stood a lion and a dragon, supporters of the arms of England." When Henry the Fourth of France, in 1610, was stabbed by Ravaillac, there were in the coach with him no fewer than seven persons, and yet no one witnessed the blow.

rolled on between the avenues of the people, scarcely a handkerchief was waved; scarcely a voice cheered. Not less chilling was the reception which he encountered in the great hall as, preceded by the lord mayor, he passed to his seat at the banquet-table. Even when the trumpet sounded, and when the toastmaster, advancing to the front of the royal table, intimated that "our sovereign lord the king" drank the "loving-cup" to the health and prosperity of the corporation of

Again, when Charles the First was entertained at the court of Madrid in 1623, we find in one of the royal equipages the King of Spain, the queen, the infanta, and the Infants Don Carlos and Don Fernando, "the infanta," writes Howell, "sitting in the boot, with a blue ribbon about her arm, on purpose that the prince might distinguish her." In another carriage on the Prado were Charles, the Duke of Buckingham, the Earl of Bristol, Count Gondomar, Sir Walter Aston, and apparently the Duke of Cea, to whom the carriage belonged. Again, in 1700, when Louis the Fourteenth accompanied his grandson, the Duke of Anjou, toward the frontiers, on his departure to assume the sovereignty of Spain, we find the whole royal family sociably seated in the enormous vehicle. "The two kings," writes St. Simon, "and the Duchess of Burgundy, sat on one side; the dauphin and the Dukes of Burgundy and Berry opposite, and the Duke and Duchess of Orleans at the two doors." Lastly, as late as 1789, when the mob dragged the unfortunate Louis the Sixteenth from Versailles to Paris, there were in the coach as many as eight persons, namely, the king, the queen, the dauphin, the Duchess of Angoulême, Louis the Eighteenth, then Count de Provence, his wife, Madame Elizabeth, and Madame de Tourgel. Coaches were of French invention. In the reign of Francis the First, there were but two in Paris; one belonging to the queen, the other to Diana, natural daughter of Henry the Second. Even as late as 1550, Paris could boast but of three coaches.

London, scarcely a murmur of applause was elicited by the announcement. Pitt, on the contrary, had been welcomed at his entrance with a burst of huzzas, and an enthusiastic clapping of hands, in which the members of the corporation, headed by the impetuous Alderman Beckford, were among the first to join. On that day, in the famous hall from which his statue still frowns down, — as if denouncing the misgovernment of kings, — the triumph of the "Great Commoner" was complete.

Pitt's conduct, in thus personally entering into a competition with his sovereign for popularity, was not only much censured at the time, but he himself subsequently lamented it as having been a grave indiscretion. "My old friend," writes Lord Lyttelton, "was once a skilful courtier; but since he himself has attained a kind of royalty, he seems more attentive to support his own majesty than to pay the necessary regards to that of his sovereign." The fact is, that in accepting the lord mayor's invitation, Pitt had been influenced, not by his own judgment, but by those of his turbulent contemporaries, Lord Temple and Alderman Beckford.[1]

[1] A letter from Alderman Beckford to Pitt, urging him to attend the banquet, is still extant. "Men's hopes and fears," he writes, "are strangely agitated at this critical juncture; but all agree, universally, that you ought to make your appearance at Guildhall on Monday next with Lord Temple; and, upon the maturest reflection, I am clear you ought not to refuse this favour to those who are so sincerely your friends." This letter is

But a triumph, nobler and far more creditable than the applause of huzzaing crowds and patriotic aldermen, awaited the fallen minister. We have seen him discovering the existence of the secret treaty between France and Spain, and urging the policy of an immediate declaration of war against the latter country; we have seen the correctness of his information discredited, his advice disregarded, and himself in consequence driven from the administration. From whatever source he may have derived that information, whether, in the words of Walpole, by "a masterpiece of intelligence," or whether, as has been confidently asserted, it was communicated to him by Lord Marischal in gratitude for the reversal of his attainder, are questions of minor importance. It is sufficient to observe that, before the end of three months from the date of Pitt's retirement, a series of events had occurred which manifested alike how wise had been his counsels, and how completely Bute and his colleagues had been made the dupes of Spanish intrigue. For some time past the language of the court of Spain had become more and more peremptory; a temperate request of the court of England to be furnished with information respecting the Family Compact had been haughtily

thus endorsed by Lady Chatham: "Mr. Beckford, 1761; to press my lord to appear with Lord Temple: to which he yielded for his friend's sake; but, as he always declared, both then and after, against his better judgment."

refused; and thus a war with Spain as well as with France became obviously inevitable. Accordingly, nearly at one and the same time, the British ambassador, the Earl of Bristol, received orders from his court to retire from Madrid, and the Spanish ambassador, De Fuentes, quitted London for Paris. On the 2d of January, 1762, the king, in full Council, announced that peace was no longer maintainable; on the 4th, Great Britain declared war against Spain, and, on the 16th, Spain declared war against Great Britain.

Peace, as has been already mentioned, was at this time the great object both of the king and Bute, and accordingly it may he readily imagined how unpalatable this new state of affairs must have been to the court. True it is, that the contest which followed proved a glorious one for England. Martinico, Granada, St. Lucia, St. Vincent, Havana, and the Philippine Islands, were, one after the other, captured from the enemy. It must be remembered, however, that it was not to Bute and to his short-sighted colleagues, but entirely to the great statesman whom they had driven from power, that the country was indebted for these glorious results. He it was who had predicted, and had made preparations for the day of peril; indeed, had his advice been followed, the treasure-ships of Spain, instead of lying safely at anchor in the Bay of Cadiz, would long since have been towed in triumph up the Thames, and their

golden cargoes been deposited in the vaults of the Bank of England. As it was, the world awarded all the credit where it was really due. Among his own countrymen the name of Pitt was rendered more popular, and throughout Europe more formidable, than ever.[1]

Parliament assembled on the 19th, and as it was known that Bute was to deliver his maiden speech on the occasion, the House of Lords was crowded with an eager audience. Of those who listened to him, there were probably but few who did not anticipate, still fewer who did not desire, a failure. Each and all, however, were destined to be disappointed. His speech, if not a triumph, was at

[1] "Give me leave," writes Bishop Warburton to Pitt, on the 26th of March, 1762, "to congratulate you on the success at Martinico. I do it with singular propriety; for it is the effect of an impulse (I hope not yet ceased) which your glorious administration had imparted to the whole political machine." Sir Richard Lyttelton also writes to Pitt from Rome, on the 14th of April: "I cannot forbear congratulating you on the glorious conquest of Martinico, which, whatever effect it may have in England, astonishes all Europe, and fills every mouth with praise and commendation, — with applause and admiration, I may say, — of the noble perseverance and superior ability of the planner of this great and decisive undertaking." "Do you think," writes Walpole to George Montagu, "Demosthenes or Themistocles ever raised the Grecian stocks two per cent. in four and twenty hours? I shall burn all my Greek and Latin books; they are histories of little people. The Romans never conquered the world till they had conquered three parts of it, and were three hundred years about it. We subdue the globe in three campaigns; and a globe, let me tell you, as big again as it was in their days."

least a success. Even the prejudiced Walpole admits that it was not "quite so ridiculous" as his enemies wished. A manner somewhat pompous and theatrical, and an affected habit of making long pauses after having delivered a passage which he imagined to be particularly telling, are said to have been the chief faults of his oratory. Charles Townshend amused his contemporaries by styling them "minute-guns."

In the meantime Bute had become first minister of the Crown in everything except in name. One impediment only prevented his at once assuming the premiership. The Duke of Newcastle — the timid, time-serving old Duke of Newcastle — still stood in his way. As Bute had so recently succeeded in displacing the most popular minister and commanding orator of his age, it might naturally have been supposed that he would have encountered little difficulty in triumphing over a despised and querulous old man, who enjoyed neither the confidence of the people nor the support of the Crown. But, in spite of hint after hint and insult after insult, Newcastle continued to cling to office with a morbid pertinacity which was almost as despicable as it was incomprehensible. Deeply steeped though he was in perfidy himself, and accustomed as he had been to plot against others, it was nevertheless long before he could be brought to comprehend that intriguers as faithless as himself were counterplotting against his own power.

The king had apparently never liked Newcastle. So early as the 6th of November, 1760, we find the old statesman plaintively writing to the Earl of Hardwicke: "The king has been remarkably cold and ungracious, insomuch that I could hardly get one word, or the least mark of approbation, at my proposal of raising twelve millions for him." Again, he writes on the following day: "For myself, I am the greatest cipher that ever appeared at court. The young king is hardly civil to me; talks to me of nothing, and scarce answers me upon my own treasury affairs." To a statesman, who for nearly half a century had not only filled the highest offices in the state, but who, with the interval only of a few months, had for eight years been prime minister of England, one might have thought that so undisguised a manifestation of contempt and want of confidence would have induced him to throw the seals of office at the feet of his sovereign. So all-absorbing, however, was his passion for power and place, that neither the contumely of his sovereign, the advice of his friends, nor the slights put upon him by his colleagues, proved of the slightest avail. With the dregs of life, observes Walpole, he clung to the dregs of power. The more he was neglected or affronted, the more the old statesman cringed, flattered, and endured. It has even been asserted that two of the subordinate lords of the treasury — Sir Gilbert Elliot and James Oswald — were

instructed to insult him at his own board. Some truth there probably was in the assertion, inasmuch as we find the duke himself complaining to the Duke of Bedford that "some late transactions" at the treasury — more especially with the secretary, Samuel Martin — must make him appear insignificant there, and are "a plain declaration of the little regard and confidence" reposed in him by his colleagues in the government. "Except in the case of the Proberts," he writes, "I don't remember one single recommendation of mine which has taken place since his Majesty's accession to the crown." Even insults, put personally upon him by his own colleagues, seem to have been borne without remonstrance. From Bute he is said to have received "the most unkindest cut of all." For instance, the duke having preferred a strong recommendation to the king for the promotion of a certain prelate to the archbishopric of York, "Why," asked Bute, "if your Grace has so high an opinion of him, did you not promote him when you had the power?" But the crowning indignity offered to him was the unprecedented measure of creating seven new peers without any previous consultation with him as first minister of the Crown. Now, it was thought, he must infallibly resign; but, on the contrary, he not only put up with the affront, but plaintively requested that his own cousin, Thomas

Pelham,[1] might be added to the number. It is extraordinary, remarked Walpole, how many shocks will be endured by an old minister, or by an old mistress, before they can be shaken off.

From his sovereign the duke continued to meet with as little consideration as he did from his colleagues. When, on the 14th of May, the duke for the first time hinted to the king an intention of retiring into private life, "Then, my lord," was the cold reply, "I must fill your place as well as I can." A similar intimation made by the duke to Bute was received by the latter in the same chilling manner. His lordship, said the duke, "answered drily that, if I resigned, the peace might be retarded; but never requested me to continue in office, nor said a civil thing to me afterward while we remained together." Nevertheless, believing his services to be indispensable, he continued to hang about the treasury; nor was it till the 26th, after further pressure had been put upon him, that his resignation was formally tendered to, and accepted by his sovereign.

Thus fell the once courted, flattered, dreaded Thomas Pelham, Duke of Newcastle, he who with impunity had insulted one heir to the crown, and had carried off the chancellorship of the University of Cambridge from another! No British

[1] Thomas Pelham, on the death of the Duke of Newcastle in 1768, succeeded him as Baron Pelham of Stamner, and in 1801 was created Earl of Chichester. He died January 8, 1805.

minister perhaps ever fell with less dignity, or less regretted. The fact is little creditable to human nature, and still less flattering to human greatness, that, notwithstanding the ranks of the church, the state, the navy, and the army were filled with his nominees and dependents; notwithstanding that half the House of Commons had either pocketed his bribes, or were indebted to him for making the fortune of a son, a nephew, or a cousin; notwithstanding that many of the judges were indebted to him for their ermine, and so many of the bishops for their lawn sleeves, yet, when he fell, "no man cried God save him;" not a single colleague paid him the compliment of retiring with him into private life. The parliamentary majorities which he had so long commanded glided unscrupulously over to the standard of Bute. The duke's splendid saloons in Lincoln's Inn Fields were deserted by his flatterers, and even his hospitable table and beautiful groves at Clermont were deserted by his friends.

> . . . "The sinking statesman's door
> Poured in the morning-worshipper no more."

"The Duke of Newcastle," writes his contemporary, Doctor King, "has spent half a million, and made the fortunes of five hundred men, and yet is not allowed to have one real friend."

However hurt and mortified the duke may have felt at the general neglect and ingratitude which

he experienced on his quitting office, it was the conduct of the bench of bishops in particular which affected him the most deeply and bitterly. He had long since taken the church into his especial favour ; the dispensation of its patronage had for years been his peculiar province. With scarcely an exception, as has already been mentioned, the bishops were indebted to him, either for their mitres or else for advancement to a wealthier diocese. Many of them he had raised from obscurity. And yet, at the farewell levee held by the retiring minister, one prelate only, Doctor Cornwallis, Bishop of Lichfield, repaired to Newcastle House to tender him his condolence. The duke was not only mortified and hurt, but was deeply and lastingly offended. His language, usually so poor and ungrammatical, rises almost to eloquence when he descants on the behaviour of the Episcopal bench. Thus, for instance, he pours out his indignation to Lord Hardwicke : "Can Christian bishops, made and promoted to the highest stations in the church by me, see[ing] such repeated acts of cruelty, uncharitableness, and revenge to one who has been their benefactor, sit still without publicly declaring against, and resenting, such measures? If that was the case, these villainies would be soon stopped, and, if it had been originally the case, would never have been attempted." It is but fair, however, to observe that Dr. Philip Young, Bishop of Norwich, had

not only the excuse of being out of town at the time of the duke's disgrace, but that to the last he remained stanch and grateful to the fallen founder of his fortunes.

At the parting interview between the Duke of Newcastle and his sovereign, when kind words could no longer be construed into an invitation to remain in power, the king, notwithstanding Newcastle's subsequent complaints to the contrary, appears to have done his utmost to soften the fall and assuage the distress of the veteran statesman. To George Grenville, Bute writes, on the 25th: "The king's conduct to the Duke of Newcastle to-day was great and generous." He feared, said the king, in the course of their interview, that his Grace's private fortune had been diminished by his zeal for the house of Hanover; he proposed, therefore, to confer on him a pension corresponding with his long services and high rank; it would be doing no more, delicately remarked the young king, than discharging a debt due to his Grace from the Crown. To the infinite credit of the duke the boon was declined by him. If his private fortune, he told the king, had suffered by his loyalty, it was a source to him both of pleasure and pride. If no longer able to serve his country he would at least not be a burden to her. His Majesty's approbation, he added, was the only reward which he asked. To Sir Andrew Mitchell Mr. Symner writes, on the 31st of December: "It

moves one to compassion to think of the poor old duke. A man once possessed of £25,000 per annum of landed estate, with £10,000 in emoluments of government, now reduced to an estate of scarcely £6,000 per annum, and going into retirement — not to say sinking into contempt — with not so much as a feather in his cap." When, shortly after the duke's retirement from office, he happened accidentally to encounter Lord Bute, the latter is said to have sarcastically congratulated him on his release from the responsibilities and cares of office, — cares which, in fact, had constituted the happiness of his life. The duke's reply was not without both point and dignity: "Yes, yes, my lord," he said, "I am an old man; but yesterday was my birthday, and I remembered that it was just at my age that Cardinal Fleury began to be prime minister of France." [1]

In the meantime, the king's domestic life appears to have been far from a happy one. His former excellent spirits had evidently forsaken him. Instead of that easy good-natured, ingratiating familiarity, which had hitherto distinguished him in his intercourse with others, his manner had become distant and cold, and his countenance ex-

[1] The duke entered on his seventieth year on the 21st July, about seven weeks after he resigned office. Cardinal Fleury was born 22d June, 1653, became first minister of France in June, 1726, and died 29th January, 1743, in his ninetieth year.

pressive of melancholy. It was evident to all who approached him that his mind was ill at ease. Shutting himself up with the queen either at Buckingham House or else at Richmond Lodge, and approached by no one but domestic servants, it was seldom that — except at a drawing-room or at a levee — he was visible to his subjects. His younger brothers were kept in the same rigid seclusion by their mother. One of them, Prince William Henry, afterward Duke of Gloucester, being asked whether he had not lately been confined by a cold, "Confined?" he answered; "why, yes, but without any cold." The king's loss of spirits was attributed by his subjects to the gloomy condition of public affairs, and his seclusion, very unjustly, we believe, to the influence of the princess dowager. But whatever the cause may have been, this system of exclusiveness — far more suited to the habits of an Oriental monarch than becoming the king of a free and affectionate people — naturally increased the unpopularity which his dismissal of Pitt, and the favours heaped by him upon Bute, had already entailed upon the youthful sovereign.

"Our sons some slave of greatness may behold,
Cast in the genuine Asiatic mould,
Who of these realms shall condescend to know
No more than he can spy from Windsor's brow."
— *Heroic Epistle to Sir William Chambers.*

And again, in the same clever poem :

> " Be these the rural pastimes that attend
> Great Brunswick's leisure. These shall best unbend
> His royal mind, whene'er, from state withdrawn,
> He treads the velvet of his Richmond lawn.
> These shall prolong his Asiatic dream,
> Though Europe's balance trembles on its beam."

If the king was unhappy, the young queen appears to have been even more so. Such was the thraldom, according to the prejudiced authority of Walpole, in which she was kept by the princess dowager, that for some time after her marriage her condition was little preferable to a gilded captivity. Not only, he tells us, were her most innocent pleasures interfered with, but a spy was set to watch her actions.[1] Much as she delighted in society, the ladies of her household were forbidden to converse with her. At Mecklenburg card-playing had been her favourite amusement ; yet now, with the exception of monotonous tête-à-tête games with the king in private, the diversion was denied to her. Out of her deep affection for her

[1] This person is said to have been the once celebrated Miss Katherine Dashwood, the "Delia" of the "Love Elegies" of James Hammond, and an intimate friend of Lord Bute. She was a ward of John, Lord Hervey, — the "Lord Fanny" of Pope's satire, — who, being prejudiced against Hammond on account of his political principles, refused his consent to her marriage with the poet, who died disordered in his intellects, on the 7th of June, 1742. As a quarter of a century had elapsed since Miss Dashwood had been last a denizen of the court, as woman of the bedchamber to the queen of George the Second,

husband she endured her thraldom uncomplainingly; yet, continues Walpole, "now and then a sigh stole out, and now and then she attempted, though in vain, to enlarge her restraint." Nevertheless, to gratify her wishes and render her happy was evidently the earnest object of her consort's heart. Among other pleasing acts of attention he took a pleasure in presenting her with jewels and in seeing her wearing them. Once only did she beg to be allowed to lay them on one side. It had been one of the injunctions of her late mother, whom she had lost only a few weeks previously, that, on the first occasion of her being a communicant at the altar as Queen of England, she should receive the sacrament unadorned with jewels and without parade. "The king," says Walpole, "indulged her; but Lady Augusta carrying this tale to her mother, the princess obliged the king to insist on the jewels, and the poor young queen's tears and terrors could not dispense with her obedience."

her reappearance at court after so long an interval naturally created some sensation. "It is comical," writes Walpole, "to see Kitty Dashwood, the famous old beauty of the Oxfordshire Jacobites, living in the palace as duenna to the queen. She and Mrs. Boughton, Lord Lyttelton's ancient Delia, are revived again in a young court that never heard of them."

"When Delia on the plain appears,
Awed by a thousand tender fears
I would approach, but dare not move;
Tell me, my heart, if this be love?"

— *Lyttelton.*

A dangerous illness with which the king was attacked about this time — an illness probably of longer duration and of a more delicate and distressing character than the court deemed it prudent to disclose — may have occasioned much of that gloom which in the summer of this year clouded the hearth of Majesty. "Your account of the king alarms me," writes Lord Hardwicke to Lord Royston, early in June, "and makes me impatient for the next account. I fear his Majesty was very ill, for physicians do not deal so roughly with such patients without necessity. God grant him a speedy recovery." Walpole also writes, on the 20th June, 1762: "Have you not felt a pang in your royal capacity? Seriously, it has been dreadful, but the danger is over. The king had one of the last of these strange and universally epidemic colds, which, however, have seldom been fatal. He had a violent cough and oppression on his breast, which he concealed, just as I had; but my life was of no consequence, and having no physicians in ordinary, I was cured in four nights by James's powders, without bleeding. The king was blooded seven times and had three blisters. Thank God, he is safe, and we have escaped a confusion beyond what was ever known, but on the accession of the Queen of Scots."

The king's sudden illness, in fact, threatened the public with a crisis of peculiar difficulty and danger. The queen was known to be in the

family way, yet unhappily no provision had been made for a regency. Had the king's illness, therefore, proved fatal, great indeed would have been the confusion. According to the old axiom, "the king never dies;" yet here was a contingency in which the sovereign might be no more and yet his heir and successor be still unborn. "Fitzakerley," [1] writes Walpole, "who has lived long enough to remember nothing but the nonsense of the law, maintained that, as the king never dies, the Duke of York must have been proclaimed king, and then been unproclaimed again on the queen's delivery. We have not even any

[1] Nicholas Fitzakerley, though described by Walpole as a "tiresome Tory lawyer," would seem in his social hours to have been a tolerably jovial companion. Some verses of the day, the authorship of which was attributed to Pulteney, Earl of Bath, accost him:

"How oft, dear Faz! have we been told
That Paul and Faz are both grown old
By young and wanton lasses!
Then since our time is now so short,
Let us enjoy the only sport
Of tossing off our glasses.

"From White's we'll move the expensive scene,
And steal away to Richmond Green:
There, free from noise and riot,
Polly each morn shall fill our tea,
Spread bread and butter, and then we
Each night get drunk in quiet.

"Unless perchance Earl Leicester comes
As noisy as a dozen drums," etc., etc.

standing law for the regency. But I need not paint to you all the difficulties there would have been in our situation."

Fortunately, the king's youth and excellent constitution befriended him. Moreover, not only had the nation the satisfaction of seeing him restored to health, but, a few weeks afterward, the birth of an heir to the throne put an end to their fears in respect to a disputed succession. The queen was taken in labour, at St. James's Palace, on the 12th of August, 1762, and soon after seven o'clock in the morning was delivered of her first-born child, afterward King George the Fourth; "the Princess of Wales, several lords of his Majesty's most honourable Privy Council, and the ladies of her Majesty's bedchamber, being present." On the 8th of September following, the ceremony of baptism was performed by the Archbishop of Canterbury in the great council-chamber of the palace; the sponsors being the Duke of Cumberland, the Duke of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, and the princess dowager.

Retired as were the king's habits at this, and up to a still later period of his life, we nevertheless discover from time to time evidences of that social benevolence and genial good-humour which, in after years, when he had shaken off his constitutional shyness and diffidence, so entirely gained him the affections of his subjects. Of this amiable character were his well-known affection and rev-

erence for Eton School. Even at this early period, the pride and satisfaction with which we find him conducting the queen over the venerable seminary evince the interest which he took in the place. On this occasion, after the usual speeches and ceremonies were over, the king good-naturedly placed the sum of two hundred and thirty pounds in the hands of the provost, for the purpose of being distributed at his discretion among the scholars. Many years afterward — at the commencement of the last of those terrible mental disorders with which Providence thought fit to afflict him — he was standing at one of the windows of his apartments in Windsor Castle with the late Marquis Wellesley, who, like the king, was enthusiastically attached to

> . . . "the schoolboy spot
> We ne'er forget, though there we are forgot,"

when his eye caught a view of the

> "Distant spires and antique towers,
> That crown the watery glade,
> Where grateful Science still adores
> Her Henry's holy shade."

Calling Lord Wellesley's attention to the prospect, "Look, my lord," he said, with a tone of reverential affection, "there is the noble school where we were all educated!" [1] Surrounded by smiles,

[1] From *private information*. Lord Chatham, Lord Camden, Lord Bute, Henry Fox, Lord Holland, Lord Sandwich, the Mar-

such as seldom beam but on happy boyish faces, listening to the cheers and acclamations of the young, the joyous, and the loyal, George the Third never appeared so happy or to so much advantage, as when, on a regatta evening, he drove Queen Charlotte in his pony-carriage over the Brocas at Eton, or when, at the close of Montem Day, he was to be seen mingling with the Eton boys in their fancy costumes, on the crowded terrace at Windsor. More than a century has passed away since he visited Eton in 1762, yet still his name is reverenced there as its kindest patron; still his birthday, the 4th of June, is celebrated with the same rejoicings as when the king himself delighted to be present. So great, it may be observed, was the interest which the king took in Eton, and such the retentiveness of his memory, that, more than once in after life, he was known to recall to the recollections of the eminent statesmen with whom he became associated, the number of times they had been "sent up for good" at school.

quis of Granby, Earl Temple, George Grenville, Lord North, Lord Cornwallis, Charles James Fox, Lord Howe, Lord Grenville, Lord Wellesley, the Duke of Wellington, Earl Grey, Canning; in fact, almost all the eminent men who held office during the reign of George III. were educated at Eton.

CHAPTER VIII.

Bute Appointed Premier — Programme of His Policy — Necessity for Extraordinary Efforts to Secure a Majority — Henry Fox, afterward Lord Holland, Induced to Join the Ministry, and Made Leader of the House of Commons in Place of George Grenville — Terms of the Coalition of Henry Fox with the Court Party — Failure of His Attempts to Obtain Whig Support — Wholesale Bribery, Corruption, and Intimidation — Duke of Devonshire, "Prince of the Whigs," Dismissed from Office and from the Privy Council — Parliament Opened by the King in Person — Pitt too Ill to Attend in His Place — Ministers Obtain a Majority — Pitt's Eloquence — His Position and Power in the House of Commons — Doctor Franklin's Opinion of Pitt.

IMMEDIATELY on the resignation of the Duke of Newcastle, Lord Bute was advanced to be first lord of the treasury; George Grenville was appointed secretary of state in his room; and Sir Francis Dashwood, a dissolute man of pleasure, chancellor of the exchequer. Four months afterward, Bute was installed a Knight of the Garter, an unmerited distinction which naturally entailed upon him the sarcasms of the wits, and especially of Wilkes:

"The king gave but one, but like t'other Scot, Chartres,[1]
All England to hang him would give him both garters;
And, oh! how the rabble would laugh and would hoot,
Could they once set a swinging this John, Earl of Bute."

At the same time that the king gave the Garter to Bute, he also conferred a blue riband upon his younger brother, Prince William Henry. "I suppose," said the youngest of the royal brothers, Prince Henry Frederick, "that Mr. Mackenzie and I shall have green ribands."

To bring the war to a close, to establish a government on a firm basis, and at the same time to strengthen the royal prerogative by rendering the sovereign independent of party faction, constituted, as we have already mentioned, the primary objects of Bute's ministerial policy. Owing to the disasters which Pitt had inflicted on the enemies of his country, the first of these objects was rendered a task of no very difficult attainment. Accordingly, under the auspices of the Duke of Bedford, who was despatched as ambassador to Paris, the preliminaries of a treaty of peace were agreed upon with the French government, the conditions of which, at any other period in the annals of Great Britain, would have been regarded as highly to her honour. The consent of Parlia-

[1] The notorious Colonel Francis Charteris:

"Now deep in Taylor and the Book of Martyrs,
Now drinking citron with his Grace and Chartres."
— *Pope's Essay on the Characters of Women.*

ment, however, had yet to be obtained for the ratification of those conditions; and, accordingly, as the day drew near on which the two houses were to reassemble, Bute began to tremble, as much for the success of his favourite policy as for the consequences which might personally befall himself. Not only were the preliminary articles of the treaty certain to be the subject of furious opposition and stormy debate, not only must he be prepared to encounter the vindictive taunts and accusations of the powerful and exasperated Whig phalanx arrayed under the awful banner of Pitt, but, as he well knew, he must make up his mind to be assailed by the prejudices, the hatred, and the rage of the great popular party, throughout the length and breadth of the land.

Moreover, in addition to these grounds for disquiet, doubts of his own talents and capacity for business had begun to force themselves on the conviction of the lately so self-opinionated and self-confident minister. He was "inexperienced," he admitted to Charles Yorke, on the 3d of September. "The weight and labour of his office," he said, "were too much for him." But still stronger are the complaints which, on the 11th of October, we find him pouring forth to his "dear George," as he usually addresses George Grenville at this time. It had been entirely, he said, in compliance with the earnest entreaties of his sovereign that he had been induced to accept the

seals of secretary of state and afterward the premiership. He had soon become tired of the former post, and was now heartily weary of the other. For some weeks past, he said, he had been urging the king to allow him to retire into private life, but so afflicted was his Majesty, whenever he repeated the entreaty, that for hours afterward he had known him sit with his head reclining on his arm, without speaking a word. Moreover, added Bute, a lady of the highest rank — one who was most deservedly dear to the king[1] — had preferred her most earnest solicitations to him to restore tranquillity to the mind of his royal master, by remaining at his post, and most reluctantly he had yielded to their several importunities. Certainly, neither with justice to his sovereign nor with credit to himself, could Bute, at this critical period, have taken a step which must necessarily have consigned the young king to the thraldom of the "great families." Accordingly, as Bute told Grenville, he had resolved to confront the worst, in hopes, in due time, of being able to rescue from the domination of a "wicked faction" the most amiable prince that ever sat upon a throne.

In this state of affairs, the whole attention of the court was turned on the means of obtaining an effectual majority in Parliament. Unless this

[1] It does not appear whether this lady was the queen or the princess dowager. Grenville was inclined to think it was the former.

object could be obtained, neither the peace, nor the deliverance of the king from the tyranny of the great houses, nor, perhaps, the immunity of Bute from proscription, could by any possibility be guaranteed. But by what means, asked the perplexed minister of himself, was this desirable consummation to be effected? Former ministers, it is true, had made little scruple of carrying their measures through Parliament by means of bribery and corruption. But how could Bute have the face to resort to similar expedients? With what conscience could the immaculate politician — he whose boast it had been that parliamentary purity should be the pride and mainstay of his administration — imitate the foul practices which had been a disgrace to preceding governments? In the opinion of the court, however, necessity knew no law, and accordingly it was resolved, by means however unconstitutional and however costly, to organise the required majority. The first and great difficulty lay in the procurement of an agent sufficiently fearless, unprincipled, and skilled in the arts of political corruption, to carry into successful operation the desperate service required of him by his employers. These qualifications, however, were in Bute's opinion to be met with in Henry Fox, afterward Lord Holland, a statesman who, on account of the conspicuous part which, in his day, he played both in society and in politics, demands a passing notice at our hands.

Henry Fox was a younger son of Sir Stephen Fox,[1] who, during the exile of Charles the Second, had held the unprofitable appointment of cofferer of the household to that monarch, but who, after the Restoration, advanced himself by his industry, his talents, and his virtues, to a high place in the favour of two successive sovereigns. The younger Fox was educated at Eton, where he was the schoolfellow of his future rival for fame and power, William Pitt. Another of their Eton contemporaries was George Grenville, who, however, was nearly four years younger than either Fox or Pitt. The youth of Henry Fox, very different from that of his father, had been principally distinguished by dissipation, wild frolic,

[1] Of Sir Stephen Fox's two elder sons, Charles, a godson of Charles II., died without issue in 1713; Stephen was created Earl of Ilchester. It used to be related as a remarkable fact by the late Lady Holland, that notwithstanding nearly two centuries had passed away since the execution of Charles I., there were still living a great-grandson of the page who attended him on the scaffold. The page in attendance was Sir Stephen Fox; the great-grandson alluded to was Henry Stephen, third Earl of Ilchester. Nearly twenty years elapsed after the death of Lady Holland, yet, curiously enough, the anecdote still held good as late as January, 1865; not, indeed, in reference to the third earl, but to his brother, William Thomas, the fourth earl. Lady Holland might have mentioned, as a still more remarkable circumstance, that between two of the most important events in the lives of the two brothers, Charles and Stephen, an interval of no fewer than seventy-seven years should have taken place. Charles was appointed joint paymaster of the forces in December, 1679; Stephen was created Earl of Ilchester in June, 1756.

and extravagance. Libertine, however, as he was, the desire of knowledge, a taste for the classical writings of antiquity, and a love of the fine arts, went far to preserve his character from entire reprobation. No one called in question either his natural talents or his administrative abilities. As an orator, his speeches were remarkable rather for close reasoning, for sound argument, for quickness in reply and keenness of repartee, than for that brilliant and overpowering flow of diction, metaphor, and invective which distinguished the orations of his rival, Pitt. "Fox," writes Walpole, "always spoke to the question, Pitt to the passions; Fox to carry the question, Pitt to raise himself; Fox pointed out; Pitt lashed the errors of his antagonists; Pitt's talents were likely to make him soonest, Fox's to keep him prime minister longest."

In private life it would have been difficult to discover a more delightful companion than Fox. His wit was playful and sparkling; his conversational powers considerable.

"Such are the nights that I have seen of yore;
Such are the nights that I shall see no more!
When Winnington and Fox, with flow of soul,
With sense and wit, drove round the cheerful bowl.
Our hearts were opened, and our converse free,
But now they both are lost, quite lost to me.
One to a mistress gives up all his life,
And one from me flies wisely to his wife."

Frank and engaging manners, a singular sweetness of disposition, and a temper which it was almost impossible to ruffle, had, up to a late period of Fox's life, obtained for him a legion of friends. He was a kind and attached husband, and as a father was indulgent even to weakness. Unfortunately, however, these amiable qualities were obscured by other faults besides personal profligacy. If he was a stanch friend, he was also a bitter enemy. To those who opposed him in politics, he showed himself — more especially toward the close of his political career — cruel, imperious, and unforgiving. Reckless as he had formerly been in wasting his health and his fortune, during the last years of his life he became singularly niggard of both. The bitter impromptu lines, suggested to Gray by the sight of Fox's favourite, but desolate, marine residence at Kingsgate, in Kent, are probably familiar to the reader:

"Old, and abandoned by each venal friend,
Here Holland formed the pious resolution
To smuggle a few years, and strive to mend
A ruined character and constitution.

"On this congenial spot he fixed his choice;
Earl Goodwin trembled for his neighbouring sand;
Here sea-gulls scream, and cormorants rejoice,
And mariners, though shipwrecked, dread to land.

"Here reign the blustering north and blighting east;
No tree is heard to whisper, bird to sing;

Yet Nature could not furnish out the feast;
And he invokes new horrors still to bring.

"Here mouldering fanes and battlements arise;
Turrets and arches nodding to their fall;
Unpeopled monast'ries delude our eyes,
And mimic desolation covers all." Etc.

Whether Lord Holland was guilty of the sweeping peculations with which he has been charged, whether, in the nervous language of the corporation of the city of London, he was really a "public defaulter of unaccounted millions," may reasonably be questioned. On the other hand, that he availed himself in a very undue manner of the perquisites and advantages of office, that he enriched himself by means which a high-minded statesman would have blushed even in contemplating, can scarcely, we think, admit of a doubt.

The personal importance which Fox had deservedly achieved by means of his eminent abilities, he had afterward improved by marrying Lady Georgiana Caroline Lennox, sister of Charles, third duke of Richmond. The match, which was a runaway one, had originally given deep offence to the house of Lennox, but a reconciliation had long since taken place between the duke and his plebeian brother-in-law. "His father," writes Walpole, "was a footman; her great-grandfather a king. *Hinc illæ lacrymæ!*"

Such were the antecedents of that irregular

man of genius, to whom the court proposed to entrust the business of carrying the treaty of peace through Parliament. "We must call in bad men," said the king to George Grenville, "to govern bad men." Properly speaking, it was Grenville to whom, as leader of the House of Commons, the task of vindicating the peace against the attacks of the opposition should have been committed. To ensure success, however, needed the combined qualities of tact, good temper, eloquence, and complete agreement with his colleagues; none of which requirements Grenville was at all likely to bring into play. On the contrary, however considerable may have been his abilities, not only were his manners unconciliating, and his elocution usually tedious and unimpressive, but there were one or two articles in the treaty of peace on which he and Bute were known to be at variance. Moreover, although Grenville, like Pitt and more than one other statesman of the time, had no great objection to profit indirectly by the corrupt practices of others, he was a most unlikely person to risk his reputation for honesty by directly resorting to those practices himself. Fox, on the other hand, was singularly daring, insinuating, and unscrupulous. Utterly regardless of the opinion of the world, and repudiating the very existence of political virtue, when he undertook the dirty work required of him, it was with the full conviction that there

was scarcely a member of Parliament who was not as likely to be influenced by unworthy pecuniary considerations as he was himself.

For the purpose of placing Fox in a position to carry out the designs of the government, it was necessary, in the first instance, to prevail upon George Grenville not only to exchange his post of secretary of state for that of first lord of the admiralty, but to yield to Fox, whom he detested, the leadership of the House of Commons. To a man so vain, and at the same time of so implacable a nature as Grenville, such a proposition was calculated to give the deepest offence; and accordingly, if Walpole's statement be correct, he listened to it with an "unspeakable astonishment, and with a rage not to be described." Grenville, however, had many reasons for preferring to put up with the affront, rather than quit the ministry in disgust. Bute, for instance, had recently flattered him with hopes of his being selected to succeed him in the premiership, and it was only by remaining in office that he was likely to attain that great object of his ambition. Moreover, he was fond of official business for its own sake, — his private means were not so considerable but that the emoluments of office were of importance to him, — and, lastly, had he retired from his post, he must have sat on the opposition benches with his brother-in-law, Pitt, with whom, not only was he at present on

the worst of terms, but whose commanding genius would have thrown him entirely into the shade. It was apparently for these reasons that Grenville was induced to resign the leadership of the House of Commons to Fox, and to remove with his private secretary and his despatch-boxes from Downing Street to the admiralty. The seals, thus vacated, were conferred upon the Earl of Halifax; Fox preferring to retain the lucrative post of paymaster-general instead of accepting the more distinguished one of secretary of state. "I was with difficulty," writes Fox to the Duke of Bedford, "excused from being secretary of state. The rest was insisted upon, or rather asked, in such terms and in such a manner, that — in short, — I was brought to feel it a point of honour to obey."

Fox had many motives for listening with satisfaction to the overtures of Bute. Obnoxious as he was to the king, on account of his private vices, and detested by the princess dowager, with whom he had long been out of favour, it must have been a matter of no trifling self-congratulation to the offended statesman to be thus invited by the court to join its councils, and to aid his sovereign in his hour of difficulty. "His Majesty," writes Fox, "was in great concern lest a good peace, in a good House of Commons, should be lost, and his authority disgraced for want of a proper person to support his honest

measures and keep his closet from that force with which it was so threatened. I was that person who could do it." Fox, moreover, had long been impatient for a seat in the House of Lords; and accordingly it was stipulated by him, as a reward for the dirty and flagitious work which he was expected to perform, that at the close of his labours he should receive a coronet. Lastly, he was anxious to measure weapons once more with his old antagonist, Pitt. Superior to that illustrious man as a debater, though not as an orator, and believing himself to be at least his equal in administrative talents, it had been with no ordinary feelings of jealousy and mortification that Fox had seen his rival preferred above himself to the highest position in the state, as well as to the foremost place in the affections of his fellow countrymen. He now, however, beheld a prospect of better times. What if Parliament could be prevailed upon to cast a censure on the war, and to pronounce the peace to be a wise and righteous measure? In such a case the laurels would be stripped from the brow of his rival. Fox's triumph would be complete. Personally speaking, Fox had everything to gain by a victory, and little to lose by defeat. If successful, he would have the option of either continuing the foremost person in the House of Commons, or else of exchanging the bustle and excitement of St. Stephen's for the easy dignity of the House

of Lords. At all events, he would be able to fall back upon his present occupation as paymaster-general, a post sufficiently lucrative in time of peace, and likely to be still more remunerative in case of a renewal of the war.

In urging Fox to join the ministry, Bute had doubtless calculated that the intimacy which had long existed between his new colleague and many of the leaders of the Whig party might be the means of inducing the latter to support the Crown in its present difficulty. Those hopes were certainly entertained by Fox himself, and were as certainly disappointed. The first person to whom he applied for assistance was his former powerful friend and patron, the Duke of Cumberland. The duke, however, not only received him with coldness, but listened to his overtures with manifest disdain. The result of an interview with the Duke of Devonshire was not more satisfactory. He trusted, said the duke, that their private friendship might continue undisturbed, but with Fox, in his new capacity of a minister of the Crown, he must decline all communication whatever. Even the unscrupulous old Duke of Newcastle, when appealed to by Fox, is said to have denounced, in scornful terms, the unnatural coalition between his former colleague and the court.

Thus disappointed in his appeals to the great Whig lords, Fox proceeded to employ his solicita-

tions, his arguments, his bribes, and his promises, in other and less scrupulous quarters. Reckless of consequences, and inflamed, as we have said, by the powerful motives of self-interest, ambition, and revenge, he entered upon his scandalous task with all that earnestness and energy which was to be expected from his fearless and unprincipled character. Without the slightest apparent compunction, he plunged at once into a wholesale system of bribery and corruption, with a tithe of which even the jobber Newcastle would have shrunk from sullying his administration. Places were recklessly multiplied in the royal household, and pensions no less profligately and unmeritedly conferred. "Leaving the grandees to their ill humour," writes Walpole, "Fox directly attacked the separate members of the House of Commons, and with so little decorum on the part of either buyer or seller, that a shop was publicly opened at the pay office, whither the members flocked, and received the wages of their venality in bank-bills, even to so low a sum as two hundred pounds." It was subsequently admitted by Martin, secretary of the treasury,[1] that no less a sum than twenty-five thousand pounds had been issued

[1] Samuel Martin, a West Indian, had formerly held an appointment in the household of Frederick, Prince of Wales. He is now best remembered from his duel with Wilkes in 1763, and Churchill's bitter verses on him in "The Duellist:"

"May he! — but words are all too weak
The feelings of my heart to speak; —

from the public exchequer in one morning for the basest purposes of corruption.

In addition to this thorough-going system of political venality and bribery, Fox made no scruple of resorting to intimidation even in the highest quarters. The great Whig lords continuing refractory, Fox soon made it manifest to them that the court was not less ready to punish opposition than to reward apostasy. The first assault upon the great aristocratic stronghold was made in the person of the Duke of Devonshire, — the "Prince of the Whigs," as he was styled by the princess dowager, — who, notwithstanding his high rank and character and the long-tried devotion of his family to the house of Brunswick, was suddenly and ignominiously dismissed from his post of lord chamberlain.[1] It was on his return from a short visit to the country that the duke repaired to the palace to pay his respects to his sovereign. Availing himself of his privilege as a great officer of

> May he! — oh, for a noble curse
> Which might his very marrow pierce! —
> The general contempt engage,
> And be the MARTIN of his age!"

[1] William, fourth Duke of Devonshire, K. G., had formerly held the appointment of lord lieutenant of Ireland. "The late Duke of Devonshire," writes Lord Waldegrave, "had great credit with the Whigs, being a man of strict honour, true courage, and unaffected affability. He was sincere, humane, and generous; plain in his manners, negligent in his dress; had sense, learning, and modesty, with solid rather than showy parts." The duke died 2d October, 1764, at the age of forty-four.

state, he at once proceeded to the back-stairs, where he desired the page-in-waiting to inform his Majesty that he was in attendance. "Tell him," said the king, peremptorily, "that I will not see him!" The page was thunderstruck, and hesitated. "Go to him," said the king, "and tell him in these very words, that I will not see him." Such a message from his sovereign was of course tantamount to a dismissal; and accordingly the duke, still more astonished than the page, desired to know to whom it was his Majesty's commands that he should deliver the chamberlain's key? "Tell him," said the king, "that orders shall be given him on the subject." Instead of waiting for these orders, the duke hurried to his own house, and, having snatched up the key, repaired with it to the secretary of state, Lord Egremont, into whose hands he thrust it, almost overpowered by his feelings. On the following morning, the duke's brother, Lord George Cavendish, resigned his post of comptroller of the household, and his brother-in-law, the Earl of Besborough, that of joint postmaster-general.

In justification of the king's treatment of the Duke of Devonshire on this occasion, it was insisted by the courtiers that his Majesty had just and ample grounds for being incensed against his Grace. Not only, they said, had the duke for some time past habitually absented himself from the meetings of the Privy Council, but he was even now, they believed, engaged in caballing with the Duke of

Newcastle against the government. Unluckily, that very morning, the king, on his way from Richmond, had himself seen the two dukes together in the same chariot.[1] But whatever grounds the young king may have had for resentment, his anger was evidently not a mere ebullition of the moment. Six days afterward, at a meeting of the Privy Council, the king, to the astonishment of the members present, not only ordered the duke's dismissal from the list of privy councillors, but actually erased his name with his own hand. The following is the entry in the MS. Council book of the day:

"*At. St. James's*, 3 *November*, 1762. This day his Majesty in Council called for the Council book, and with his own hand struck the name of William Duke of Devonshire, out of the list of privy councillors." The two last occasions on which similar summary proceedings had taken place had been in the cases of William Pulteney, who was struck off the list in 1731, on account of his political conduct, and of Lord George Sackville, in 1759, in

[1] If any faith could be placed in a popular anecdote of the day, it would seem that the repugnance which the duke entertained for Lord Bute induced him on one occasion to be personally wanting in respect to the king. "The mob," writes Lady Temple to her husband, on the 17th December, "have a good story of the Duke of Devonshire; that he went first to light the king, and the king followed leaning upon Lord Bute's shoulder, upon which the Duke of Devonshire turned about, and desired to know *which he was waiting upon?*"

consequence of a sentence of court martial having found him guilty of pusillanimous conduct at the battle of Minden.

As regards the conduct of Fox on this occasion, the fact of his having previously lived on terms of the most friendly intimacy with the Duke of Devonshire naturally subjected him to very heavy animadversions. He wrote, indeed, to the duke, positively denying that he had had any share in the affronts which had been put upon his Grace, but the duke, it is said, did not even make a pretence of believing him. Moreover, the house of Cavendish, to the close of Fox's career, never ceased to resent the indignity which they believed had been offered by him to the head of their family.

In the meantime the emissaries of Fox had been at work in all quarters. For the purpose of securing the desired majority in Parliament, no expedient was left untried and no influential individual overlooked. Some were bribed, and others frightened into submission. The Earl of Orford was tempted with the rangership of St. James's and Hyde Park. Messengers were stationed at the different seaport towns to waylay the Marquis of Granby on his return from the Continent, and to tempt him with the choice of either the ordnance or the command of the army. Marshal Conway, whose integrity rendered him superior to a bribe, was got rid of by being selected to conduct the army to

England; and, lastly, in order to silence the tongue of the king's brother, the Duke of York, whose boyish abuse of Bute and the Scotch appears to have given great offence to the king, his Royal Highness was despatched on an idle expedition to Italy.

But, unjustifiable as were these proceedings, far more reprehensible was the persecution which was subsequently made to fall upon the heads of those who either opposed, or else refused to support, the court. The Dukes of Newcastle and Grafton, and the Marquis of Rockingham, were deprived of the lord-lieutenancies of their several counties, and, but for the personal interposition of Fox, the same insult would have been offered to the Duke of Devonshire. The duke, however, preferred sharing the fate of his friends to being under an obligation, and consequently flung up his lieutenancy in disgust.

Still more shameful was the system of oppression which was carried by Fox into the second, and sometimes into the third and fourth ranks of the state. It amounted, in many cases, not only to persecution, but to positive cruelty. A Mr. Schultz, who for seven years had been a gentleman of the bedchamber, was dismissed merely because he was without a seat in Parliament; and a worthy and gallant officer, Admiral Forbes, was removed from the board of admiralty, to enable Fox to make room for one of his own friends. Far from

being satisfied with dismissing lord lieutenants of counties, and removing tellers of the exchequer and lords of the admiralty, Fox and his inquisitors extended their searching scrutinies and their inhumanity even to the humblest departments of the state. It was only necessary to ascertain that a clerk in a government office owed his situation to being related to an opposition member of Parliament, or that a Whig opposition peer had obtained a messenger's place for his wife's footman, or an exciseman's situation for the son of his gamekeeper, and these unfortunate underlings were frequently sent about their business, in order to provide places for the friends and relatives of the advocates of peace. "I hope," writes Rigby to his friend, the Duke of Bedford, "no military men may be turned out; but I would clear away in the civil employments." And again the heartless *gourmand* writes: "I have reason to believe there will be a general *déroute* from the Duke of Grafton's lieutenancy of the county of Suffolk to the underlings in the Custom House; and I think, if military men are excepted, as I trust they will be, the measure entirely right." It was happily said on this occasion that Bute had turned out every one whom Whig influence had brought into office, with the exception of the king. A more nefarious and cruel system of politics could scarcely be conceived. A poor man in Sussex, who had distinguished himself by his gallantry in a desperate

affray with smugglers, was deprived of his pension for no better reason than that it had been procured for him by the Duke of Grafton. A still meaner affront was offered to the house of Cavendish. A lady of that name, the widow of an admiral,[1] instead of having been placed on the pension list at the time of her husband's decease, had been appointed housekeeper of one of the public offices. Probably her place was wanted for another. At all events, Fox's agents chose to presume that her late husband had been related to the Duke of Devonshire, and accordingly orders were given for her instant dismissal.[2]

The amount of misery which was entailed on private families by the policy of Bute and the sweeping brutality of Fox it would be difficult to exaggerate. For the conduct of the former, some slight excuse presents itself. With all his faults of incompetency and self-sufficiency, and oppressive and cruel as his policy may have been, he was at least actuated by a conviction, however mischiev-

[1] Admiral Philip Cavendish. He died in 1743.

[2] Nine years after this cruel persecution, Horace Walpole writes: "On the 10th of April, 1771, when Lord North opened the Budget, T. Townshend reflected on Lord Holland as author of the proscriptions at the beginning of the reign. Charles Fox said he did not believe his father had any hand in them; but if he had it *was right to break the power of the aristocracy that had governed in the name of the late king.* Charles Fox asked me afterward in private if the accusation against his father was just. I replied I could not but say it was." Charles Fox, let it be remembered, was in 1771 a lord of the admiralty, and a Tory.

ous it may have been, that he was working out certain principles which were to emancipate the Crown from the domination of a selfish and tyrannical oligarchy, and to deliver his country from the horrors of an unprofitable war. But for Fox, apparently, no such excuses can be discovered. Ambition, revenge, and the desire of a coronet, seem to have been the ruling incentives for his conduct. "Fox," said the Duke of Cumberland, "has deceived me grossly, for I thought him good-natured, but in all these transactions he has shown the bitterest revenge and inhumanity."

The court had been promised a triumph by Fox, and he did not disappoint them. As the day appointed for the meeting of Parliament drew near, the mingled feelings of interest and curiosity, which had for some time prevailed throughout the country, increased almost to intensity. At length, on the 25th of November, Parliament assembled. On that day the king, on his way to Westminster, was received by the populace with an ominous silence, while Bute, on the same occasion, was not only hissed and pelted, but on his return encountered much rougher usage. "To avoid the like treatment he had met in going," writes Rigby, "he returned in a hackney-chair; but the mob discovered him, followed him, broke the glasses of the chair, and, in short, by threats and menaces, put him, very reasonably, in great fear. If they had once overturned the chair, he might very soon

have been demolished." Fortunately for him, affairs within the walls of Parliament went more smoothly than without. On the 30th the preliminaries of peace were laid before both Houses, and in each House it was decided to take them into consideration on the 9th of December. One name — the magic name of Pitt — was now on every lip. To Pitt alone the great masses of the people looked for delivery from the tyranny and oppression which, they were told, were impending over them. From his eloquence alone they hoped for a victory over the court. But, to the dismay of the popular party no less than to the satisfaction of the Court, Pitt was ill, — too ill, it was whispered in political circles, to render it likely that he would be able to take a part in the approaching contest. Under these circumstances, Nicolson Calvert, member for Tewkesbury, supported by other friends of Pitt, moved for an adjournment of the House of Commons till such time as the great statesman should be able to attend in his place. The motion, however, was made to little purpose. Ministers put forth all their strength to effect its defeat; the result being that they carried their point by an overwhelming majority of 213 votes against 74.

Unquestionably Pitt in his place in Parliament was what Lord Chesterfield described him — "*ipse agmen*, a host in himself." He was gifted by nature with almost all the qualities which are requisite to constitute a great orator. His figure

was imposing and graceful; his eye was singularly eloquent and full of fire; his features were capable of every variety of expression; his full, rich, silvery voice was no less capable of every variety of intonation. Great, however, as were his natural advantages as an orator, he was not without his defects. His style was occasionally too florid and his action too theatrical. His speeches were at times wanting in close reasoning and acute arguments; his expositions were occasionally prolix and verbose. As a debater, he was certainly inferior to more than one of his contemporaries, and in the art of reply he was confessedly deficient. But, on the other hand, his eloquence was distinguished by passionate and heart-stirring appeals to the feelings; by bold flights of fancy; by striking and appropriate metaphors; by varied and copious knowledge; by the occasional and happy introduction of anecdote; by animated allusions to past historical events; by clear and manly statements of his views and sentiments; and lastly, when it suited his purpose, by fierce denunciations and bitter invectives. To these qualities must be added the evidence which his speeches afforded of a noble and generous elevation of sentiment; a loathing of all that is mean and sordid; and a deep appreciation of all that is good and beautiful.

In powers of invective Pitt was without a rival. In such terror, indeed, was he held by the House of Commons that usually a mere glance of his eye,

whether expressive of contempt, defiance, or aversion, was sufficient to daunt the boldest. At other times, when the offence given him was very great, it was his practice to bear down upon the culprit with such a vehemence of indignation, contemptuous ridicule, and insulting sarcasm, that the exhibition is said to have been almost terrifying. On one occasion, for instance, after having spoken in the House of Commons without receiving a reply, he was slowly walking out of the House when, just as he reached the lobby door, his ear caught the words, "I rise to reply to the right honourable member," words delivered by a member who usually stood in especial awe of him, and who would never have dreamed of addressing the House, but that he imagined himself to be relieved of the presence of the magician. Pitt turned around, and, as he walked leisurely back to his place, repeated, with formidable deliberation, from Virgil:

"At Danaum proceres, Agamemnoniæque phalanges,
Ut videre virum, fulgentiaque arma per umbras,
Ingenti trepidare metu: pars vertere terga,
Ceu quondam petiere rates; pars tollere vocem
Exiguam: inceptus clamor frustratur hiantes."[1]

— *Æneid*, lib. vi. ver. 489.

[1] "——— Appalled, dismayed,
The hostile chiefs the god-like man surveyed.
Some turned and fled, astonished at the view,
As when before him to their fleets they flew.
Some raised a cry; the fluttering accents hung
And died imperfect on the trembling tongue."

— *Pitt's Translation of the Æneid.*

The *vox exigua* was at once hushed. Pitt, on reaching his seat, looking disdainfully at the discomfited delinquent, exclaimed, "Now let me hear what the honourable member has to say to me!" Butler, who relates this anecdote in his "Reminiscences," inquired of his informant, who was present, whether the House did not laugh at the ridiculous figure cut by the unfortunate member. "No," replied the other; "we were all too much overawed to laugh." Wilkes has borne witness to the "keen lightnings" which flashed from Pitt's eyes. "They spoke," he said, "the haughty fiery soul before his lips had uttered a syllable."

Pitt's set and studied speeches were usually failures. Such, for instance, was the case when he delivered his prepared eulogium on the death of Wolfe, — an occasion on which his contemporaries had anticipated an outburst of eloquence worthy alike of the living and of the dead. On the contrary, it was vapid and commonplace. It was only, in fact, when he spoke from the impulse of the moment, and when he was entirely natural, that his eloquence blazed forth in its full splendour. It was usually some merely accidental circumstance — the ironical laugh of a political opponent, the expression of some illiberal sentiment, or some imagined affront to himself or to his country — which elicited from him those impassioned outbursts of eloquence on which his great fame as an orator mainly rests. On such occasions it was, that, his

ideas flowing faster than his words, he gave vent to those heart-stirring appeals to the patriotism of his listeners, those withering denunciations of the living, and mournful and eloquent panegyrics on the dead, which half impressed his audience with the conviction that he was an inspired being.

No finer debate was ever listened to in the House of Commons than on the occasion when, in the month of November, 1755, the well-known "Single-Speech" Hamilton achieved his first and last great parliamentary success. George Grenville had far surpassed himself in a speech of uncommon merit, and, after him, William Murray, afterward Lord Mansfield, had delivered a masterpiece of artful and jesuitical eloquence, when there arose a young man whose features were almost new to the House, and whose voice was now for the first time raised within its walls. His articulation was strong and clear; his delivery spirited; his manner had all the ease of an habitual and accomplished debater. The speech which he delivered was full of antithesis, and his antitheses were full of argument. He proved, moreover, to be as ready in reply as he had been fluent in delivery. "He spoke for the first time," writes Walpole, who was present, "and was at once perfection." This person was William Gerard Hamilton. "You will ask me," adds Walpole, "what could be beyond this? Nothing; but what was beyond what ever was, and that was Pitt! He spoke at past one

for an hour and thirty-five minutes. There was more humour, wit, vivacity, finer language, more boldness, in short more astonishing perfections, than even you, who are used to him, can conceive. He was not abusive, yet very attacking on all sides. He ridiculed my Lord Hillsborough, crushed poor Sir George, terrified the attorney, lashed my Lord Granville, painted my Lord of Newcastle, attacked Mr. Fox, and even hinted up to the duke."[1] It was on this occasion that Pitt — in comparing the unnatural coalition between Newcastle and Fox to the junction of the Rhone and the Saone — delivered one of his most celebrated metaphors. "At Lyons," he said, "I was taken to see the place where the two rivers meet; the one gentle, feeble, languid, and, though languid, yet of no depth; the other a boisterous and impetuous torrent. But, different as they are, they meet at last."

Of the famous orations of Pitt, fragments only, with one exception,[2] have been handed down to us. Those fragments, however, are worth one of the missing books of the "Fairy Queen" which he loved so well. We are indebted for their preservation to the forcible language, the epigrammatic point and singular felicity of expression, which combined

[1] "Sir George" means Sir George Lyttelton; "the duke," the Duke of Cumberland.

[2] On the employment of Indians in the American War. It is said to have been revised and corrected by Pitt himself.

with his half-inspired majesty of look and manner, so impressed themselves on the minds of his listeners as to enable them to carry away his words in their memories, doubtless to be repeated over and over again to their friends and acquaintances. True it is that, in forming our estimate of Pitt's oratorical powers, we are compelled to draw largely on tradition. Nevertheless, from the exquisite specimens of his eloquence which have been handed down to us, as well as from the extraordinary effect which we know that he produced on the minds of his contemporaries, it would perhaps not be paying him too high a compliment were we to compare him, if not as a debater, at least as an orator, with the greatest masters of eloquence, whether of ancient or of modern times.

Pitt's peculiar method of crushing an adversary in the House of Commons may be illustrated by the following anecdote. Mr. Morton, Chief Justice of Chester, a barrister of some eminence, happened, in the course of a speech, to introduce the words, "King, Lords, and Commons," to which he added, with his glance fixed pointedly on Pitt, "or, as that right honourable gentleman would call them, Commons, Lords, and King." Astounded at his boldness, Pitt deliberately rose from his seat, and called him to order. "I have frequently," he said, "heard in this House doctrines which have surprised me; but now my blood runs cold. I desire the words of the honourable

member may be taken down." The clerks of the House having taken them down, "Bring them to me!" he said, in a voice of thunder. Morton by this time appears to have been frightened out of his senses, and began to stammer out his apologies. He meant nothing, he said; indeed he meant nothing. Pitt sank his voice almost to a whisper. "I do not wish," he said, "to push the matter farther." Then, assuming a louder tone of voice, he added: "The moment a man acknowledges his error, he ceases to be guilty. I have a great regard for the honourable member, and as an instance of that regard, I give him this advice," here he paused for a few moments, and then fixing upon the delinquent a look of withering contempt, he added: "When that member means nothing, I recommend him to say nothing." On another occasion, when Sir William Young happened to interrupt him during one of his speeches by calling out, "Question, question," Pitt fixed on him the same look of indescribable scorn. "Pardon, Mr. Speaker," he said, "my agitation; but when that member calls for the question, I fear I hear the knell of my country's ruin." [1] It was observed by

[1] "It is related," writes Lord Brougham, "that once in the House of Commons he began a speech with the words, 'Sugar, Mr. Speaker,' and then perceiving a smile to pervade the audience, he paused, looked fiercely around, and with a loud voice, rising in its notes and swelling into vehement anger, he is said to have pronounced again the word 'Sugar!' three times; and having thus quelled the house, and extinguished every appearance of

the celebrated Doctor Franklin, that he had sometimes met with eloquence without wisdom, and often with wisdom without eloquence; but in Mr. Pitt only had he seen them both united, and then both, he thought, in the highest degree.

levity or laughter, turned around and disdainfully asked, 'Who will laugh at sugar now?'"

CHAPTER IX.

Great Popular Excitement — Debate in Parliament on Preliminaries of Peace — Pitt, Though Seriously Ill, Speaks on the Question — Triumph of the Government — Exultation of the Court — Bute Personally Unpopular — Financial Difficulties of the Government — Sir Francis Dashwood, Chancellor of the Exchequer, and His Budget — Resignation of Bute — His Character and Disposition — His Patronage of Literature, Science, and Art — Bute's intimacy with the Princess of Wales — Resignation of Fox — Fox created Baron Holland.

THE 9th of December — the day fixed upon for the discussion of the preliminaries of the peace — at length arrived. Outside, as well as within the walls of Parliament, impatience and curiosity were raised to the highest pitch. Palace Yard was crowded by dense masses of people who, as Bute and the advocates of the peace from time to time made their appearance, greeted them with yells and execrations. It was still a matter of uncertainty whether Pitt would be well enough to be present, and the doubt increased the general excitement. The eleventh hour had arrived and the debate had already commenced, and yet no sign of the approach of the "Great Commoner" had gladdened the hearts of his friends. Only too well they were aware that, unless upheld by his presence and aided

by his eloquence, any crusade against the court must prove a fruitless one, and, accordingly, despondency was beginning to take possession of their hearts. In the meantime, within the walls of the House of Commons the friends of the government found themselves breathing more freely. Already they had begun to believe themselves exempt for a season from the bitter taunts, the fierce denunciations, and the contemptuous sneers of their great political opponent. Already, to their imaginations, the majority on which they had calculated was swelled into an overwhelming triumph, when suddenly there arose from the dense crowd in Palace Yard a shout of exultation, which pealed through every part of the ancient palace of the Confessor. The voice of the member who was addressing the House was drowned by the noise. The advocates of the peace were seized with consternation. After the lapse of a few seconds, a concourse of people, shouting and huzzaing, was heard ascending the stairs. The doors of the House were thrown open, and the striking figure of the "Great Commoner" — supported by two attendants, and pale almost to ghastliness — presented itself before the astonished assembly. He was dressed in a suit of black velvet; his legs and thighs were wrapped in flannel; his feet were covered with buskins of black cloth. His servants having set him down within the bar, several of his friends hurried to his assist-

ance, with whose aid and with that of his crutch he reached his accustomed seat. "He had the appearance," writes Walpole, who was present, "of a man determined to die in that cause, and at that hour." The languor which pain had imprinted on his emaciated countenance, the recollection of the great and brilliant services which he had rendered to his country, the place, the occasion, and the attire so well timed and so artistically arranged, made a lasting impression on those who happened to be witnesses of this memorable scene. [1]

By means of having frequent recourse to cordials, Pitt was enabled to speak for three hours and forty minutes. Notwithstanding, he said, the excruciating tortures to which he was a martyr, he had resolved, at the hazard of his life, to attend Parliament upon that day, in order to lift up his voice, his hand, his arm, against a measure which not only threatened to rob the war of half its glory, but which, in his opinion, was opposed to the best interests of the nation. He beheld, he said, in the proposed peace preliminaries the seeds of future hostilities. The peace would prove an insecure one, inasmuch as it would reinstate France and Spain in their former greatness, and power of do-

[1] The sick statesman on this occasion was allowed the almost unprecedented indulgence of delivering his sentiments seated; an indulgence which had formerly been accorded to Lord Orrery in December, 1669, and which was afterward extended to Mr. Wickham, in July, 1805, and to Mr. T. Wyndham in 1811.

ing mischief; it was inadequate, inasmuch as the territorial conquests which Great Britain intended to retain would afford no equivalent for those she proposed to surrender. Toward the termination of his speech his strength failed him, and he was compelled to desist. Like most of Pitt's premeditated orations, his speech on this occasion was not one of his happiest. It was deficient, indeed, neither in argument, nor in occasional beauties of thought and language; but in many parts it was tedious and uninteresting, and was altogether wanting in that fiery grandeur and those impassioned bursts of eloquence which had so often, on less momentous occasions, disconcerted his opponents. His voice, moreover, which had formerly been so thrilling and sonorous as to peal through the farthest lobbies of the old Saxon palace, was now so faint and feeble as at times to be inaudible even in the House itself. Pitt had no sooner concluded his speech than Fox rose to reply to him, on which, to the infinite surprise of all present, the great orator raised himself from his seat, and, with the help of his crutch and the assistance of his friends, withdrew from the assembly. Whether, in thus yielding the battle-ground to his dexterous and unprincipled adversary, Pitt was desirous of conveying an impression to the House that he despised Fox too much to care about waiting to listen to his arguments, or whether, as his biographer supposes, he was really completely exhausted and in

"an agony of pain," appears to be a matter of doubt. At all events, his withdrawal threw a fatal damp over his party, and left Fox an easy victory. On the illustrious invalid again making his appearance in Palace Yard, the former huzzas were redoubled. As his chariot drove off between the opening masses of people, the crowd, affected by his emaciated appearance, increased their clamour; many of them shouting out, in reference to the length of his speech, "Three hours and a half! three hours and a half!"

In the House of Commons, the preliminaries were eventually approved of by a large majority, there being three hundred and nineteen against sixty-five. In the House of Lords, where Bute agreeably surprised his friends by speaking with admirable good sense, temper, and propriety, there was no division.[1] Not only was he satisfied, said Bute, that all the dearest interests of his country required peace, but, he added, somewhat theatrically, that he trusted that a record of the share which he might have in putting an end to hostilities might be engraved upon his tomb.[2]

[1] In the address which the lords voted to the king, they thanked him for the "humane disposition and paternal affection to his subjects," which had been shown by him in "putting a safe and honourable end to a burthensome and expensive war." The Duke of Cumberland, much as he was prejudiced against Lord Bute, pronounced his speech to have been "one of the finest he ever heard in his life."

[2] This sentimental observation of Lord Bute gave rise to

The court had achieved a great triumph. The king made no scruple of speaking of himself as one providentially emancipated from an oppressive thraldom; the princess dowager was heard to exclaim, exultingly: "Now my son is King of England!"[1] The courtiers joined, of course, in the cry of exultation. His Majesty, they boasted, was at last a king. The Whig magnates — that aristocratic cabal which for so many years had insolently domineered over their sovereign — were at last humbled and rendered powerless. The royal prerogative was about to shine out in its proper lustre. In other words, the court had now the leisure, as well as the money and the power, to carry out its dangerous, however well-intentioned, projects. So entire, indeed, was the discomfiture of the leaders of the great Whig party, that when Parliament reassembled after Christmas they scarcely ventured even upon a show of resistance. That the young king, whatever other motives he

the following epigram, which, at the time, was in everybody's mouth:

"Say, when will England be from faction freed?
When will domestic quarrels cease?
Ne'er till that wished-for epitaph we read, —
'Here lies the man that made the peace.'"

[1] "George, be king!" is said to have been the frequent monition of the princess to her son; an expression, however, very unlikely to have been ever uttered; and, if uttered, still more unlikely to have been repeated by the courtiers.

may have had, was for humanity's sake very desirous of peace, it would be unjust to him to deny. Rigby has recorded the singular joy which he manifested when the accession of the Duke of Bedford to the peace party was first announced to him. "I have heard much," he writes to the duke, "of the Duke of Newcastle's kisses, but never had one from him till to-day, and I thought his Majesty and Lord Bute would have kissed me too, I was so received by them both at St. James's." To the Duke of Bedford the king himself writes, on the 26th of October: "The best despatch I can receive from you, and the most essential to my service, will be these preliminaries signed. May Providence, in compassion to human misery, give you this means of executing this great and noble work, and be assured I will never forget the duty and attachment you show to me in this important crisis."

Yet, signal as was the triumph which Bute had obtained, and high as he was supposed to stand in the good graces of his sovereign, he had become both a discontented and an unhappy man. Success instead of diminishing had increased his difficulties. The public had been taught by the opposition that the peace was only the first step toward a despotism; and accordingly, instead of the popularity which Bute had promised himself as the reward for his having terminated an expensive and sanguinary war, he found himself the

object of almost general abuse and dislike. At the theatres, every offensive word, spoken by the actors, that could be made applicable to him, was immediately caught up, and vociferously responded to by the audience. A line reflecting on favourites, spoken by Mrs. Pritchard in Cibber's comedy of "The Careless Husband," was received with rounds of applause.[1] On all sides, the unlucky minister was assailed by the lampooners, the caricaturists, and pamphleteers, from the caustic prose of Wilkes, and the fierce and powerful verse of Churchill, to the low and scurrilous effusions of Grub Street. In one caricature of the time he is delineated as scourging Britannia with thistles; others represent the highroads to London as crowded with ragged Scotchmen; another, entitled "The Royal Dupe," pictures the young king as being lulled to sleep in his mother's lap, unconscious of the presence of Bute and Fox, the former of whom is engaged in stealing his sceptre and the latter in picking his pocket. But the form of popular attack which naturally afforded the greatest pain to the court was the public and indelicate manner in which the wits and lampooners continued to associate the name of the first lord of the treasury with that of the mother of the sovereign. On one occasion the mob was bold

[1] "*Lady Easy.* Have a care, madam! An undeserving favourite has been the ruin of many a prince's empire."—*The Careless Husband*, Act iv., Scene 1.

enough to carry about the streets of London a gallows, from which were suspended — previously to their being committed to the flames — a jack-boot and a woman's petticoat; the former being a miserable play upon the earl's Christian name and title, and the petticoat typical, of course, of the princess dowager. Not less offensive was a paper which appeared in Wilkes's famous periodical, the *North Briton*, in which, under the names and in the characters of Queen Isabella and "the gentle Mortimer," the writer symbolises the tender connection which was presumed to exist between Bute and the royal foundress of his fortunes. But grossest of all was a frontispiece to one of the numbers of *Almon's Political Register*, in which Lord Bute is represented as being secretly introduced into the bedchamber of the Princess of Wales; the identity of which is rendered unmistakable by a widow's lozenge, which, with the royal arms delineated upon it, is suspended over the head of the bed.

These and other libellous attacks — whether they were levelled against the Scots as a nation, or whether against individuals, as in the case of the princess dowager and Lord Bute — were, of course, in the highest degree disgraceful, not only to the hireling authors[1] and limners of the day,

[1] As an instance of the utterly unprincipled dealings of some of these Grub Street maligners, may be related an anecdote of the well-known and really highly gifted Gilbert Stuart, whom his

but also to the age which encouraged their scurrilities. That one, at least, of the members of the late Cabinet, — Lord Temple, — warmly aided and abetted the cowardly slanderers, is a fact as certain as it is discreditable.

It should be remembered that, in the opinion of many persons, Bute, by bringing the war to a conclusion, had done the state good service. "The war," said the dying Carteret, "had been the most glorious, and the peace was the most honourable this nation ever saw." Bute's enemies, however, not only denied him the credit even of good intentions, but continued to raise so fierce an outcry against him, that it had become perilous for him to appear in the streets except in disguise, by night, or else protected by pugilists by day. "He went about the streets," writes Lord Chesterfield, "timidly and disgracefully, attended at a small distance by a gang of bruisers, the scoundrels and ruffians that attend the Bear Gardens." "A gentleman, who died not many years ago," writes Lord Macaulay, "used to say that he once recog-

countryman, Somerville, the historian, mentions meeting, in 1769, at the hospitable table of Murray, the publisher, in Fleet Street. "I was astonished," wrote Somerville, "at the effrontery as well as the impudence with which he dared to avow a want of all principle and honour. He showed me two contrasted characters of Alderman Beckford, the idol of the mob, which he was to insert in the antagonist newspapers most in circulation; one a panegyric and the other a libel, for each of which he expected to receive the reward of a guinea."

nised the favourite earl in the piazza of Covent Garden, muffled in a large coat, and with a hat and wig drawn over his brows." Not since Lord Chancellor Jeffries had been seized in a sailor's dress in Wapping, had a British statesman been reduced to more ignominious straits, or been in greater danger from the fury of the mob. On one occasion, when on his way to the House of Lords in a sedan-chair, it was only by the timely arrival of the Horse Guards that he was rescued from the violence of the populace.

In the meantime, although the court had been triumphant on one most important occasion, there were still other questions pending, which were fraught with difficulty, if not with danger, to the minister. It was a period of great financial embarrassment. The cost of the war had been enormous. The odious task of imposing fresh taxes had become a matter of absolute necessity. Never had the country stood in more need of an able financial minister, yet seldom had there been a more inefficient chancellor of the exchequer than Sir Francis Dashwood, the statesman who was now preparing his budget for the consideration of Parliament.

Sir Francis was the only son of Sir Francis Dashwood, Baronet, by Lady Mary Fane, daughter of Vere, fourth Earl of Westmoreland. In his political opinions he was a Tory; he had formerly been an uncompromising Jacobite. Although

gifted neither with eloquence nor with eminent administrative ability, his blunt and hearty manner of speaking in the House of Commons had obtained for him a reputation for political honesty and strong sense. In his youth he had travelled over many countries, and in private life was an eminently entertaining and agreeable companion. Here, however, our encomiums of him must cease. Lax as were the morals of the age in which he lived, it may be questioned whether he was surpassed by any one of his contemporaries in profaneness, obscenity, and vice. His wild and irreverent frolics were the constant talk of his time. One of them, which occurred at Rome, will suffice to satisfy the curiosity of the reader. Formerly, it seems, on a Good Friday in the Holy City, it was the custom for a devotee, on entering the Sistine Chapel for the purpose of performing self-penance, to receive from the attendant at the door a small whip, with which, at a certain signal, he was required to scourge himself. The chapel was lighted by three candles only, which were extinguished one by one, at brief intervals of time, by the priest. On the blowing out of the first candle, the penitents divested themselves of their upper garments. A second candle was then extinguished, on which a further disrobement took place; and lastly, on the blowing out of the third candle, which left the chapel in complete darkness, the several penitents commenced flagellating them-

selves, giving vent at the same time to appropriate groans and lamentations. It was on one of these occasions that Sir Francis, having provided himself with a formidable riding-whip, which he concealed beneath his upper coat, took the small scourge from the attendant and, advancing to the farther end of the chapel, placed himself demurely among the devotees. On the extinction of the third candle he proceeded to put in practice the unjustifiable joke which he had projected. Drawing his riding-whip from beneath his coat, he commenced laying it about him right, and left, till he reached the chapel door; the penitents all the while believing that the Evil One was among them, and shrieking out, "*Il diavolo! il diavolo!*" In the confusion, Sir Francis contrived to effect his escape. The outrage, however, was subsequently traced to him, and accordingly no choice was left to him but to make the best of his way out of the papal dominions.

Sir Francis, it should be related, founded on his return to England the once well-known Dilettanti Club, an eccentric association composed chiefly of young men who had made the tour of Europe, and who had acquired a taste for antiquities and the fine arts. The nominal qualification, according to Walpole, was having been in Italy; the real one was getting drunk. Each of the members sat for his portrait, which was ornamented with peculiar symbols and devices. That of their founder rep-

resented him in the habit of St. Francis, at his devotions before a copy of the statue of Venus de' Medici, from which issued a stream of light, that shed its rays upon the kneeling libertine.[1]

Such were the character and habits of the statesman to whose lot it fell, at this critical period, to discharge the intricate and onerous duties of minister of finance. Of everything connected with commercial matters he seems to have been as ignorant as Bute himself. According to one of the wits of the day, he was a "man to whom a sum of five figures was an impenetrable secret." Sir Francis, indeed, laughed at his own incompetency. "People," he said, "will point at me in the streets, and cry, 'There goes the worst chancellor of the exchequer that ever appeared!'"[2] Nevertheless, he had the hardihood to lay his budget before the House of Commons, when not only did it prove as signal a failure as the world had anticipated, but many of his expositions were

[1] During many years in the last century this infamous picture — for utterly infamous it was — hung openly in the great room of the King's Arms Tavern, in New Palace Yard, where the Dilettanti Club had at one time held their meetings.

[2] His predecessor, Lord Barrington, though a much better man, had given, as he himself candidly admits, small promise of turning out a much better chancellor of the exchequer. "The same strange fortune," he writes to Sir Andrew Mitchell, on the 23d of March, 1761, "which made me secretary at war, five years and a half ago, has made me chancellor of the exchequer. It may, perhaps, at last make me Pope. I think I am equally fit to be at the head of the Church as of the exchequer."

received with shouts of derision. One of his propositions was to lay a tax upon cider, an impost so hateful to the country gentlemen, that, before many days had passed, the cider-counties, hitherto the most loyal in England,[1] had spirited themselves up almost to a state of insurrection. It was during an exciting discussion on this unpopular item, that George Grenville received a memorable buffet from his brother-in-law, Pitt. It was the late war, said Grenville, or rather it was the profligate extravagance with which it had been carried on, that had occasioned the necessity for additional taxation.[2] "I call upon the honourable gentlemen opposite to me," he repeated in his usual querulous style, "to say where they would wish to have a tax laid? I say, sir, let them tell me where! I repeat it, sir! I am entitled to say to them — tell me where?" Pitt, to whom any reflection on the conduct of the war was tantamount to an insult offered to himself, instantly and indignantly rose from his seat. Every eye in the House was fixed upon him, and presently every member was convulsed with laughter, as, fixing his eye contemp-

[1] "Yet was the Cider-land, unstained with guilt;
The Cider-land, obsequious still to thrones,
Abhorred such base, disloyal deeds, and all
Her pruning-hooks extended into swords."
— *Philips's Cider*, Book 2.

[2] "In 1714, the public debt was £54,145,363, bearing an interest of £3,351,358. Upon the close of the war in 1762, it amounted to £146,683,844, bearing an interest of £4,840,821."

tuously on his brother-in-law, and mimicking his languid and monotonous tone of voice, he repeated the words of a popular song by Howard, then familiar to every ear :

"Gentle Shepherd, tell me where!"

This sarcasm Pitt followed up by a terrific volume of invective, which he had no sooner concluded than Grenville, in a transport of fury, sprang on his feet. "If gentlemen," he commenced, "are to be subjected to such contemptuous treatment —" Pitt, however, was satisfied with his triumph, and accordingly, making a bow to Grenville, accompanied by a glance of the most withering disdain, he again rose from his seat, and walked deliberately out of the House. It was the "most contemptuous look and manner," writes Rigby to the Duke of Bedford, "that I ever saw." And again Rigby adds : "So much ingenuity and insolence I never saw or heard before." From that day, Grenville was never able to shake off the nickname of "The Gentle Shepherd."

Notwithstanding the unpopularity of the Cider Bill, and the strenuous opposition which it met with in both Houses of Parliament, so great was the influence of the court at this period that it was carried by large majorities, and in due time became part of the law of the land. Two protests against it were entered on the Journals of the House of Lords ; this having been the first in-

stance, it is said, of the Peers having divided on a Money Bill.

Thus had Bute achieved his second triumph. England, as Walpole obverves, was lying "submissively prostrate" before him. "Those," as Dodington had prophesied, "who had been at his throat were now at his feet."

Yet it was at this very time, when the favourite of fortune was in the full possession, and apparently in the full enjoyment of power, that the world was amazed at the announcement that he had ceased to be minister. To his friends, Bute notified that ill health, and the unpopularity which he had been the means of entailing on his sovereign, were the causes of his retirement. His physicians — he wrote to the Duke of Bedford — had warned him that any constant application to business might prove fatal to him. Some time since, he added, he had received a "solemn promise" from the king that he should be allowed to retire as soon as peace might be obtained, and his Majesty had now been reluctantly induced to fulfil his promise. "And now, my dear lord," he continues, "need I make use of many arguments to prevail on the Duke of Bedford to assist his young sovereign with his weight and name — that sovereign who has not a wish but what terminates in this country's happiness, and who, since he mounted the throne, has shown ever the highest regard and predilection for the Duke of Bedford?"

— "Lord Bute," writes Lord Barrington to Sir Andrew Mitchell, "resigned last Friday. He will have no office, and declares he will not be a minister behind the curtain, but give up business entirely. The reasons he gives for this step are that he finds the dislike taken to him has lessened the popularity which the king had and ought to have; that he hopes his retirement will make things quiet, and his Majesty's government easy. He says that he unwillingly undertook the business of a minister, on the king's absolute promise that he might retire when the peace should be made."

Instead of sharing the astonishment which was felt by Bute's contemporaries at his voluntary retirement from power, there would, we conceive, have been much more reason for surprise had he deemed it prudent to remain. Increasing doubts in his own mind, in regard to his capacity to conduct the affairs of a great nation, vexation at the hatred and contempt with which he was regarded by the middle and lower classes, disgust at the scandalous scurrilities to which he was exposed in common with the second lady in the realm, fear of personal violence at the hands of the rabble,[1] and, lastly, fear of impeachment by Parliament in the event of the Whig lords recovering their

[1] "The fact must be certain," writes the Duke of Newcastle to Pitt, on the 9th of April, 1763, "that the minister was thoroughly frightened from the universal resentment of the whole nation which he has drawn upon himself."

former despotic authority, were, in addition to the reasons assigned by himself, motives quite powerful enough to induce a much bolder and less sensitive man than Bute to desire to quit the helm. Moreover, already the "great families" were engaged in reorganising their divided forces. Early in the preceding month, there had taken place at Devonshire House a "great coalition dinner," at which Pitt and Lord Temple had been ominously present, and at which a joint plan of action against the insolent upstart and Tory interloper, as the Whigs regarded Bute, had been enthusiastically agreed upon. "Their countenances," writes Rigby to the Duke of Bedford, "are quite cleared up since they have put themselves under Pitt's management." The coalition is said to have been composed of the Dukes of Devonshire, Bolton, and Portland; the Marquis of Rockingham; the Earls of Albemarle, Ashburnham, Hardwicke, and Besborough; Earls Temple and Cornwallis; Lords Spencer, Sondes, Grantham, and Villiers; Sir George Savile, Pitt, and James Grenville. Rigby further mentions the Duke of Grafton as having been present at the "great coalition dinner" at Devonshire House. George Grenville, it will be observed, kept aloof from his former friends.

Another source of vexation to Bute was the timid and lukewarm support which he received from his own colleagues. "Single, in a cabinet of

my own forming," he writes to a friend; "no aid in the House of Lords to support me except two peers;[1] both the secretaries of state silent, and the lord chief justice, whom I brought myself into office,[2] voting for me but speaking against me, — the ground I stand upon is so hollow that I am afraid not only of falling myself, but of involving my royal master in my ruin. It is time for me to retire." As far as his personal interests were concerned, the earl had but few inducements to tempt him to remain in power. His vanity had been gratified by his having filled the highest office to which the most ambitious subject can aspire. He had secured the Order of the Garter for himself, and an English peerage for his son. He had succeeded in accomplishing the two great objects of his political existence, the bringing the war to a close, and the overthrow of the Whig oligarchy. By the death of his father-in-law, Mr. Edward Wortley Montagu,[3] he had become the

[1] The Earls of Denbigh and Pomfret. [2] Lord Mansfield.

[3] Lord Bute had married, in 1736, Mary, daughter of Mr. and the celebrated Lady Mary Wortley Montagu. Horace Walpole writes to George Montagu, on the 7th of February, 1761: "Have you heard what immense riches old Wortley has left? One million, three hundred and fifty thousand pounds! It is all to centre in my Lady Bute: her husband is one of fortune's prodigies." Gray also writes, about the same period: "You see old Wortley Montagu is dead at last, at eighty-three. He has left better than half a million of money." According to Lord Chesterfield, Lady Bute, by the death of her father and mother, came into possession of "five or six hundred thousand pounds."

possessor of a noble fortune, and consequently the emoluments of office had ceased to be any longer of importance to the princely proprietor of Cardiff Castle and Luton. Lastly, he had the good fortune to be blessed with those redeeming tastes and accomplishments which alike afford occupation to, and throw a grace over, retirement. "I never knew a man," writes his frequent guest, M. Dutens, "with whom one could be so long tête-à-tête without being tired, as Lord Bute. His knowledge was so extensive, and consequently his conversation so varied, that one thought oneself in the company of several persons, with the advantage of being sure of an even temper in a man whose goodness, politeness, and attention were never wanting toward those who lived with him."

Bute, writes Lord Chesterfield, "had honour, honesty, and good intentions. He was too proud to be respectable or respected; too cold and silent to be amiable; too cunning to have great abilities." Bishop Warburton also says of him, in one of his letters: "Lord Bute is a very unfit man to be prime minister of England. First, he is a Scotchman; secondly, he is the king's friend; and thirdly, he is an honest man." "The great cry against Lord Bute," writes Lord Chesterfield, "was on account of his being a Scotchman; the only fault which he could not possibly correct."

That Lord Bute was cold and proud by nature, that he was a narrow-minded politician, and

an inefficient minister, may be asserted without much fear of contradiction. But, on the other hand, that he was the harsh, austere, inaccessible domestic tyrant, such as his political opponents have represented him to be, may, we think, be with equal safety denied. Lady Hervey, whose praise is of value, writes on the 15th of December, 1760: "So much I know of him, though not personally acquainted with him, that he has always been a good husband, an excellent father, a man of truth and sentiments above the common run of men. They say he is proud. I know not. Perhaps he is. But it is like the pride they also accuse Mr. Pitt of, which will always keep them from little, false, mean, frivolous ways; and such pride may all that I love, or interest myself for, ever have!" That his heart was susceptible of the kindest natural feelings, more than one anecdote might be adduced to prove. On the 27th of May, 1756, Mr. G. Elliott writes to George Grenville: "I passed all day yesterday with Lord Bute, whom I found deeply affected with the death of Bothwell, his old tutor, to whom, more from habitude than on any other account, he was much attached." To the poor and the deserving the purse of Lord Bute was ever open. "He employed me often," writes M. Dutens, "to assist industrious artists who might be saved from ruin by a little sum given in the moment of want; and I have been many times employed by him to visit

the prisons, in order to release insolvent debtors, whom he did not personally know, and who never knew their benefactor."

There was one public measure of which Bute is said to have been the suggester, namely, the securing the uprightness and independence of the judges by obtaining an act of Parliament continuing to them their commissions notwithstanding the demise of the Crown, for which much credit has been awarded him.[1] Far greater credit is his due on account of the conscientious manner in which he dispensed the patronage of the Church. To George Grenville he writes, on the 9th of January, 1762: "There is no part of my situation, arising from the king's partiality to me, that I prize more than ecclesiastical patronage: not for the sake of making friends or forming party, but from conviction that a proper choice of the clergy, especially of those in the higher preferments, is rendering to my king and country a most essential service."

According to Lord Waldegrave, Lord Bute, though possessing but a trifling stock of learn-

[1] Lord Hardwicke, in a speech in the House of Lords, eulogises this measure "as truly worthy the most renowned legislators of antiquity." On the other hand, one of his successors in the chancellorship, Lord Campbell, pooh-poohs it as a trumpery act of legislation, — in fact, as no boon at all. "We owe," writes Hallam, "this important provision to the Act of Settlement; not, as ignorance and adulation have perpetually asserted, to his late Majesty, George III.

ing, was anxious to be thought "a polite scholar and a man of great erudition." "The earl," writes Walpole, "had so little knowledge and so little taste, that his own letters grew a proverb for want of orthography." These statements, however, would seem to be greatly exaggerated. When M. Dutens visited him at Luton in 1773, he found the earl's library consisting of thirty thousand volumes. His cabinet of mathematical instruments and astronomical and philosophical apparatus was considered one of the most complete in Europe; he certainly possessed a taste for architecture and painting; he was the collector of that noble gallery of pictures which is now in the possession of his representative;[1] and lastly, it seems to have been owing to the taste for floriculture which he early instilled into the mind of his royal master, that the public are now indebted for the unrivalled national botanical gardens at Kew. Neither should the debt of gratitude which Kew owes to Queen Charlotte be forgotten. According to Sir James E. Smith, president of the Linnæan Society, "few persons cherished the study of nature more ardently, or cultivated it so deeply."[2]

[1] Charles Fox was of opinion that Lord Bute was a "still more magnificent man," as regarded a taste for, and as a collector of, "pictures or fine things," than another noble virtuoso of the time, Lord Landsdowne.

[2] Lord Bute printed, at his own expense, a splendid work on botany, in nine volumes quarto. Only twelve copies were

Even Walpole admits that Bute extended his patronage to artists and men of letters. True, indeed, it is, that the persons whom he patronised were chiefly his own countrymen, — as, for instance, Mallet, Smollett, Murphy, Macpherson, the professed translator of Ossian, and Home, the author of "Douglas," — but still, exceptionable as the selection may have been, it was creditable to him as a minister to have succoured genius at all.

> "The mighty Home, bemired in prose so long,
> Again shall stalk upon the stilts of song:
> While bold Mac-Ossian, wont in ghosts to deal,
> Bids candid Smollett from his coffin steal;
> Bids Mallet quit his sweet Elysian nest,
> Sunk on his St. John's philosophic breast,
> And, like old Orpheus, make some strong effort
> To come from hell, and warble truth at court."[1]

Frederick, Prince of Wales, for some time previously to his death, would seem to have set less and less value on the friendship and judgment of Bute. The Princess of Wales, on the contrary, retained her friendship — or, as some would have it, her love for him — to the last. "The princess dowager," writes Lord Waldegrave, "discovered other accomplishments, of which the prince, her husband, may not, perhaps, have been the most

printed, one of which is in the royal library. In 1813 a copy was sold for £82 19*s*.

[1] Heroic Epistle to Sir William Chambers.

competent to judge." The visits of Lord Bute to Carlton House are said to have been usually made of an evening and with great secrecy; the earl, on such occasions, borrowing the sedan-chair of one of the ladies of the princess's household, Miss Vansittart, and drawing the curtains close, in order to avoid detection.[1] "The eagerness," writes Walpole, "of the pages of the back-stairs to let the princess know whenever Lord Bute arrived, and some other symptoms, contributed to dispel the ideas that had been conceived of the rigour of her widowhood." And again Walpole writes: "I am as much convinced of an amorous connection between Bute and the princess dowager as if I had seen them together." Yet, after all, these bold opinions are founded on no tangible facts. "It is certain, on the one

[1] That suspicions of the existence of a tender connection between the princess and Lord Bute were current even in the lifetime of her husband is shown by the well-known retort addressed to her by her maid of honour, Miss Chudleigh, when — on the occasion of the latter appearing in a half-nude state as Iphigenia at a masked ball at Somerset House — the princess pointedly rebuked her immodesty by throwing a veil over her person, "*Votre Altesse Royale sait que chacune a son But.*" The ball in question took place on the 1st of May, 1749. "Miss Chudleigh's dress, or rather undress," writes Mrs. Montagu to her sister, "was remarkable. She was Iphigenia for the sacrifice, but so naked the high priest might easily inspect the entrails of the victim. The maids of honour, not of maids the strictest, were so offended they would not speak to her." Walpole also writes, "Miss Chudleigh was Iphigenia, but so naked that you would have taken her for Andromeda."

hand," writes Lord Chesterfield, "that there were many very strong indications of the tenderest connection between them; but, on the other hand, when one considers how deceitful appearances often are in those affairs, the capriciousness and inconsistency of women, which make them often be unjustly suspected, and the improbability of knowing exactly what passes in tête-à-têtes, one is reduced to mere conjectures." Since so shrewd and well-informed a man of the world as Lord Chesterfield was unable to solve the mystery, it would surely be presumption on our part to pronounce any opinion on this difficult as well as delicate question. Whether, however, Lord Bute's connection with the princess was of a tender nature or not, it was certainly blended with a friendship which death only was able to terminate. If, for instance, the reader of these pages should chance to visit Luton, in Bedfordshire, his attention will, in the park, be attracted to a plain Tuscan pillar surmounted by an urn, which, according to tradition, was raised by Lord Bute in honour of his royal mistress, but which, in fact, was erected in the days of the former possessors of Luton, the Napiers, to the memory of some lamented scion of their house. But, if the visitor will raise his glance to some height up the pillar, he will be able to detect a touching inscription, bearing date the year in which the princess died, — a silent yet eloquent

memorial of the grateful attachment of a fallen minister to the royal lady whose friendship had so often consoled him in the hours of difficulty and danger, and when his name had become a byword of reproach and contempt.

DUM MEMOR IPSE MEI
DUM
SPIRITUS HOS REGIT ARTUS.
A —— N
1772.

Lord Bute's resignation took place on the 8th of April, 1763; that of Fox immediately followed. The latter claimed the peerage which had been guaranteed to him as the reward of his political apostasy, and accordingly on the 16th he was advanced to the dignity of Baron Holland. About the same time, Sir Francis Dashwood was raised to the peerage as Baron Le Despencer, a title which had been for some years in abeyance in his family.[1]

Notwithstanding the general conviction which existed — and, indeed, which still exists — to the contrary, there is reason to believe, not only that Bute's influence over his sovereign had been for some time on the wane, but that, so soon as the earl had succeeded in securing a parliamentary majority in favour of the peace, the king with no great reluctance accepted his resignation. "I

[1] Lord Le Despencer died December 9, 1789, when the barony devolved upon his kinsman, Sir Thomas Stapleton, Bart.

believe," writes Walpole, "that, even before his accession, the king was weary both of his mother and of her favourite, and wanted to, and did early shake off much of that influence." Bute — as the Duchess of Brunswick, George the Third's eldest sister, afterward assured Lord Malmesbury — had flattered himself that the king would have entreated him to remain in office; but, added the duchess, the king accepted the seals from him in silence. A like presumption may be gathered from a remarkable conversation which, forty years after Bute's resignation, the king held with George Rose at Cuffnells. Bute, he said, was unhappily deficient in political firmness; a most essential quality in a first minister of the Crown. "This," writes Rose, "led his Majesty to remind me of the anecdote related by him, in 1801, of his lordship, while minister, — when surrounded in his carriage by a mob near the House of Lords, — coming to him in a panic, followed by the mob to St. James's, to dissuade his Majesty from going to the play, and of the rebuke he gave his lordship for that proceeding. He said, however, that his lordship did not want talents, and that Lord Mansfield had assured him he never knew any one, who came so late into business, take to it and do it so well."

CHAPTER X.

George Grenville Appointed Premier — Grenville in the House of Commons — John Wilkes, and Liberty of the Press — The New Order of "Franciscans" — The *North Briton*, Newspaper — "General Warrants" — Wilkes Committed to the Tower, but Released on Writ of Habeas Corpus — Popular Excitement in London — The King's Dissatisfaction with the Grenville Ministry.

It was at the recommendation of Lord Bute — as has been generally supposed — that the king sent for George Grenville, and conferred upon him the honour which he most coveted, — the premiership.[1] In offering this advice to his sovereign, it was Bute's intention, according to his enemies, to make use of Grenville as a mere political puppet; he himself continuing to enjoy

[1] George Grenville, second son of Richard Grenville, Esq., of Wotton, by his marriage with Hester, Countess Temple, was born October 14th, 1712. He was educated at Eton and afterward at Christ Church, Oxford. Mr. Grenville represented the town of Buckingham in Parliament continuously from 1741 till his death on the 13th of November, 1770. He married, in 1749, Elizabeth, sister to Charles, Earl of Egremont, and daughter of Sir William Wyndham, by whom he became the father of George Grenville, first Marquis of Buckingham, of William, created Baron Grenville, and of the late Right Hon. Thomas Grenville.

the solid advantages of power, exempt from its perils and responsibilities, while he left to his delegate the empty title of premier. If such were the case, and if Bute really looked upon Grenville as the mere complaisant and tractable being which this supposition implies, he was destined to be signally disappointed. Not that, in thus forming a low estimate of Grenville's character and abilities, Bute was singular in his error. Probably there was not one of Grenville's own colleagues — possibly not one even of his own nearest relations — who had discovered how deep-rooted and all-absorbing was the ambition which lurked beneath the cold nature and uninviting aspect of this remarkable man.[1] "He had hitherto," writes Walpole, "been known but as a fatiguing orator and indefatigable drudge,

[1] The Duke of Newcastle, however, was wise enough to see through Bute's design, if such existed, as well as to discover Grenville's real character. On the day after Bute's resignation we find his Grace writing to Mr. Pitt: "I suppose he [Bute] hopes to retain the same power and influence out of employment that he had in it; but he may find that difficult. I question whether he has chosen the best person to act under him for that purpose." Lord Chancellor Hardwicke, on the contrary, seems to have anticipated that Bute would retain to the full his former influence. To Lord Royston he writes on the 4th September, 1763: "I have been very credibly informed that both Lord Halifax and George Grenville have declared that he [Bute] is to go beyond sea, and reside for a twelvemonth or more. You know Cardinal Mazarin was twice exiled out of France, and governed France as absolutely whilst he was absent as when he was present."

more likely to disgust than to offend." Even after he had risen to be first minister of the Crown, the House of Commons seems to have treated him with no great respect. "I wish," said Sir Fletcher Norton one day to him, in the House, "that the right honourable gentleman, instead of shaking his head, would shake an argument out of it." [1] Even those who were capable of appreciating the ability of his financial and commercial expositions seem to have regarded him in a not much higher light than as a painstaking bore.

George Grenville usually figures as one of the most short-sighted and inefficient premiers of modern times. Nevertheless he possessed many of the qualifications requisite to fill high office with credit. His abilities were much above mediocrity; his personal courage was unquestionable, and the interests of his country were ever near to his heart. His private and political integrity were equally unimpeachable. As a man of business, he was punctual and indefatigable. Having been called to the bar, he had the advantage of carrying with him into public life a competent knowledge of law. In his youth, instead of having associated with the hazard-players at White's, the macaronis at the Cocoa Tree, or the jockeys at Newmarket, the future premier had

[1] "Sir Fletcher," writes Lord Temple to Lady Chatham, "was brutal and impertinent to George Grenville last night."

lived laborious days in gloomy chambers in one of the inns of court. Since then he had served a long and diligent apprenticeship in various offices of the state. From having been a junior lord of the admiralty, in 1744, and of the treasury in 1747, he had risen to be treasurer of the navy in 1754, secretary of state in 1762, and the same year, to be first lord of the admiralty. While employed in these several departments he is said to have made himself completely master of the business and duties of each. Lastly, a well-deserved reputation for religion and strict morality raised him high in the estimation of an influential party in the state. "Mr. Grenville," writes Bishop Newton, "was not only an able minister, but was likewise a religious good man, and regularly attended the service of the church every Sunday morning, even when he was in the highest offices."

On the other hand, Grenville was afflicted with infirmities of mind and temper which were certain to mar his success as first minister of the Crown. He was a fatiguing talker and a bad listener. In his intercourse with others there was no amenity; no openness, no geniality, no tact. His nature was suspicious and unforgiving; his manners cold and ungracious, his countenance unprepossessing. He was distinguished by a self-conceit and a self-confidence which were proof against the most persuasive arguments and

the most incontrovertible facts.[1] To persuade him that on any occasion he had been in the wrong in his public capacity is said to have been next to an impossibility.

As a statesman there was no grandeur in Grenville's policy. Though at times he was a powerful speaker, there was nothing ennobling in his eloquence, nothing enlightened in his conceptions, and no expansion in his views. When called upon to direct the helm of government, he carried with him to the service of the state, qualifications which would have been invaluable in a manager of a great mercantile establishment, but which were often rendered worse than barren when brought to bear on the interests of a great empire. Economy, in his opinion, was the first of virtues. It was a virtue, however, which, laudably as he may have cultivated it in the management of his domestic concerns, was often turned to a very ill account by this short-sighted minister, when applied to the affairs of the public. For instance, there occurred an opportunity during his administration, when the expenditure of a few hundred pounds would have cleared the suburbs and thoroughfares of the metropolis of the cutpurses and footpads by which they were then infested, yet he refused to sign the treasury minute which would have

[1] Yet it was more than whispered at the time that his political conduct was too much influenced by his wife, a strong-minded, and most probably ambitious woman.

remedied the crying evil. Again, when the king and queen remonstrated that their domestic privacy at Buckingham House was about to be disturbed by the erection of the houses which now form part of Grosvenor Place, Grenville refused to purchase — although for the comparatively trifling sum of £20,000 — a tract of ground which would have added another healthy area to the metropolis, and of which the pecuniary value is now incalculable. On the more famous and ruinous consequences of his pettifogging endeavour to wring a paltry tax from the Americans, it would at present be premature to dwell. Grenville's proper element was in the House of Commons. He was a firm believer in its infallibility as a national senate. He was ready enough to accept the axiom that all power is derived from the people, yet the people having once delegated that power to their representatives, he held that the community had ceased to have any voice or concern in the administration of affairs.[1] It was in the House of Commons that his financial knowledge, and thorough acquaintance with the business of the state gave him a preëminent advantage over his contemporaries. Of the duties, the precedents, and constitution of that assembly he was intimately cognisant. Even after the longest and most fatiguing debate it seems to have been no effort to him to sit down

[1] "In his discourse," writes Walpole, "I thought him a grounded republican."

and write a long account of it to the king. As Burke said of him, "he took public business, not as a duty he was to fulfil, but as a pleasure he was to enjoy." He seemed, in fact, to have no delight out of the House of Commons. Once, when he was taken ill, and fainted in the House, George Selwyn, amidst loud cries from the members for ammonia and cold water, was overheard exclaiming, "Why don't you give him the journals to smell to!"

Grenville, following a precedent furnished him by Sir Robert Walpole and afterward by Mr. Pelham, combined in his own person the two offices of first lord of the treasury and chancellor of the exchequer. His principal supporters in the government were the Earls of Egremont and Halifax. His two most formidable opponents were his brother, Earl Temple, and his brother-in-law, Mr. Pitt, both of them recently his colleagues in office, and both of them formerly among the most trusted of his friends.

Grenville had scarcely been a month at the head of the treasury, before his near-sighted views and intolerant temperament induced him to commit his famous and fatal blunder of declaring war against the celebrated Wilkes and the press. John Wilkes, whose name figures so prominently in the social and political history of these times, was the son of a wealthy distiller in Clerkenwell, from whom he had inherited a considerable prop-

erty in Buckinghamshire.[1] He was at this period member for Aylesbury, and lieutenant-colonel of the Buckinghamshire militia. Long previously to his having achieved a reputation as a political writer, he had made himself conspicuous, in the gay world, by the charm of his conversation, by the fastidious luxuriousness of his repasts, by his lively and ready wit, and by his wild frolics and Bacchanalian debaucheries. He was a scholar. He was endowed with the easy address and engaging manners of an accomplished man of fashion; his presence of mind and self-possession had never been known to fail him; his personal intrepidity had been proved on many trying, though not always on very creditable occasions. "He was a delightful and instructive companion," writes his friend, Butler, the Reminiscent, "but too often offensive in his freedom of speech when religion or the sex was mentioned. In his manner and habits he was an elegant epicurean, yet it was evident to all his intimates that he feared

"'Manes aliquos et subterranea regna.'"

So ready was his wit that, according to the same authority, wagers were laid that from the time of his leaving his house in Great George Street, till

[1] Wilkes was born, at his father's house in St. John Street, Clerkenwell, on the 17th of October, 1727, and consequently, at the time of his famous collision with the Grenville ministry, he was in his thirty-sixth year.

he reached Guildhall, there would not be a person, whom he might meet and converse with, but would leave him either with a smile or a hearty laugh. Gibbon, the historian, who passed in his society the evening of the 23d of September, 1762, has done full justice to the fascination of his conversational powers. "I scarcely," he writes, "ever met with a better companion. He has inexhaustible spirits, infinite wit and humour, and a great deal of knowledge. He told us himself, that in this time of public dissension he was resolved to make his fortune." "This," adds Gibbon, "proved a very debauched day. We drank a good deal, both after dinner and supper, and when at last Wilkes had retired, Sir Thomas [Worsley] and some others, of which I was not one, broke into his room and made him drink a bottle of claret in bed." "In private society, particularly at table," writes his acquaintance, Sir Nathaniel Wraxall, "Wilkes was preëminently agreeable; abounding in anecdote; ever gay and convivial; converting his very defects of person, manner, or enunciation, to purposes of merriment or entertainment. If any man ever was pleasing who squinted, who had lost his teeth and lisped, Wilkes might be so esteemed." Wilkes's squint, which has been immortalised by Hogarth, was once conspicuous on a tithe of the tavern sign-boards in England. One day, as he himself used to relate, his attention was attracted toward an old lady who was

intently looking up at one of these evidences of his popularity. "Ah!" at last he heard her murmur to herself, "he hangs everywhere but where he ought to hang."

But, whatever agreeable or redeeming qualities Wilkes may have possessed, they were completely thrown into the shade by the unblushing licentiousness of his private life. His profligacy shocked even the profligate. He was one of that debauched fraternity, consisting of men of wit and fashion, who, having restored and fitted up the ruins of Medmenham Abbey, near Marlow, adopted the monastic garb at their convivial meetings, and instituted the most immodest rites and ribald mysteries within its sacred walls. The ruins of the old abbey, formerly a convent of Cistercian monks, still stands, surrounded by rich meadows, by hanging woods, and venerable elms, in a beautiful and secluded spot on the banks of the Thames. Over the principal entrance was the inscription, borrowed from Rabelais's Abbey of Theleme, "Fay ce que voudras." In the pleasure-grounds, the temples, statues, and inscriptions all savoured of the impure tastes and irreverent wit of the modern denizens of the abbey. The members of the new order styled themselves Franciscans, in honour of their father abbot, Sir Francis Dashwood.

> "Dashwood shall pour from a Communion cup
> Libations to the Goddess without eyes,
> And hob and nob in cider and excise."

Each monk had his cell and appropriate name. In the chapel — the embellishments of which were of so immodest a character that none but the initiated were permitted access to it — the monks not only adapted the sacred rites of the Roman Catholic Church to the profane worship of Bacchus and Venus, but are said to have carried their blasphemy to such a pitch as to administer the Eucharist to an ape. The members of the Medmenham Club whose names have been handed down to us were, besides Sir Francis Dashwood and Wilkes, Bubb Dodington, afterward Lord Melcombe, Sir Thomas Stapleton, father of the twenty-second Lord Le Despencer, Paul Whitehead, the poet, who was secretary to the brotherhood, and Thomas Potter, son of the then late Archbishop of Canterbury, one whose rare and promising abilities as an orator and man of letters unhappily succumbed to habits of debauchery and an early grave. Laurence Sterne has been named as one of the fraternity, but apparently on no very sufficient grounds. Lord Sandwich's connection with the club is more than once referred to in a clever poem of the time, entitled "Ode to the Earl of Sandwich:"

> "The midnight orgies you reveal,
> Nor Dashwood's cloistered rites conceal," etc.

And again:

> "In vain you tempt Jack Wilkes to dine,
> By copious draughts of chaliced wine,
> And anthems to Moll's Rose," etc.

Such was the society of which the celebrated Wilkes was the idol. Such was the man who, instead of being held up to scorn and detestation by his contemporaries, was not only worshipped by the populace, but courted by the grave and the great. The sober-minded — fascinated by his wit and conversational powers — found excuses for his licentiousness; while women overlooked his exceeding ugliness in the charm of his gallantry, his wit, and his good humour.

The particulars of Wilkes's married career furnish another scandalous page to the curious story of his life. Brought up in the persuasion of the Dissenters, he had married, at the age of twenty-two, an amiable woman professing the same persuasion. As the lady was many years older than himself, the presumption seems to be that he married her solely for the sake of her fortune, which was a considerable one. At all events, before many years had passed away, his dissipated habits, and the dissolute society which he introduced into his house, compelled her to seek a separation from him. By this time all that remained to her, of her former ample means, was an inconsiderable annuity; and even of this pittance he is said to have endeavoured to deprive her by an appeal to the courts of law.

Baffled in this attempt, and possessing no longer the means of supporting his expensive tastes for women and the table, Wilkes now thought of be-

taking himself to the thriving trade of patriotism, which has been so often, as Doctor Johnson wittily defines it, the "last refuge of a scoundrel." His success, which it is needless to say was complete, was rendered the more remarkable owing to the mediocrity of his oratorical powers. His elocution was cold, insipid, and occasionally flippant. His rhetoric was usually composed of declamations on behalf of liberties and rights for which he cared but little, and against corruptions, in the fruits of which he would willingly have participated. According to Walpole, who was his contemporary in the House of Commons, so deficient was he in "quickness or talent for public speaking," that he was scarcely listened to with patience. Once, when the House seemed resolved not to hear him, and a friend urged him to desist, "Speak," he said, "I must! — for my speech has been in print for the newspapers this half-hour." Fortunately for him, he was gifted with a coolness and effrontery which were only equalled by his intrepidity; all three of which qualities constantly served his turn in the hour of need. As an instance of his audacity, it may be mentioned that on one occasion he and one other person put forth, from a private room in a tavern, a proclamation commencing, "We, the people of England," etc., and concluding, "By order of the meeting!" Another amusing instance of his effrontery occurred on the hustings at Brentford, when he and Colonel Lut-

trell were standing there together as rival candidates for the representation of the county of Middlesex in Parliament. Looking down with great apparent apathy on the sea of human beings, consisting chiefly of his own votaries and friends, which stretched beneath him, "I wonder," he whispered to his opponent, "whether among that crowd the fools or the knaves predominate?" "I will tell them what you say," replied the astonished Luttrell, "and thus put an end to you." Perceiving that Wilkes treated the threat with the most perfect indifference, "Surely," he added, "you don't mean to say you could stand here one hour after I did so?" "Why not?" replied Wilkes. "It is you who would not be alive one instant after." "How so?" inquired Luttrell. "Because," said Wilkes, "I should merely affirm that it was a fabrication, and they would destroy you in the twinkling of an eye."

As a political writer, Wilkes achieved a much greater success than as a parliamentary speaker. Not long after the accession of George the Third, appeared the first number of his famous periodical, the *North Briton.* Its easy and impudent style of composition, the caustic humour which it displayed, and the racy attacks which it contained upon Lord Bute and the Scotch, very speedily rendered the new gazette popular, and its author celebrated. "The highest names," writes Walpole, "whether of statesmen or magistrates, were

John Wilkes.

Photo-etching from a rare old print.

printed at length, and the insinuations went still higher." The merits of Wilkes as an author this is not the place to discuss. When Walpole, however, speaks of his writings as being merely suited to "the mob and the moment," he certainly does injustice to the real humour, and the pleasant style and satire, to which Wilkes's writings may unquestionably lay claim. The cleverest of his literary productions are generally admitted to have been his dedication to Lord Bute of "Roger Mortimer, a Tragedy;" his notes upon Bishop Warburton, and his ironical criticism upon the Speaker's reprimand to the printers. Wilkes himself greatly preferred the first. In the opinion of Lord Brougham, the last is by far the best.

The wit and acrimony with which Wilkes had lately assailed Lord Bute he now hurled against Grenville. The new minister had only been a fortnight in office, when the forty-fifth number of the *North Briton* made its memorable appearance. It contained, indeed, some severe comments on the speech from the throne, and even charged the ministers with placing a falsehood in the mouth of their sovereign; and yet, compared with the audacious contents of some of its predecessors, this particular paper was a comparatively harmless one. Under all the circumstances of the case, Grenville should either have followed the example set him by Bute, by treating the patriot with real or assumed contempt, or else he might have secured

his silence and his services by conferring on him a lucrative appointment. That Wilkes had his price is now sufficiently well known. Not only, during the time that Mr. Pitt was in office, had he twice made application for employment under the government, — once for a seat at the Board of Trade and on another occasion for the ambassadorship at Constantinople — but he had recently caused it to be intimated to Lord Bute that he had only to appoint him to the government of Canada, in order to render him for the future a devoted servant of the Crown. But it was not in Grenville's nature to resort to gentle measures when there were arbitrary ones at hand, and accordingly he resolved on setting the whole power of the law at work against Wilkes, even at the double risk of involving himself in a profitless and hazardous war with the press, and of converting a pseudo-patriot into a political martyr.

But, if the prosecution of Wilkes was an impolitic act, still more indefensible were the means by which it was carried into effect. We allude, of course, more especially, to the famous arrest of Wilkes, and of the persons associated with him in the publication of the *North Briton*, by a general warrant, — that is to say, by a warrant which empowered those entrusted with its execution to seize, not only any person or number of persons, but also their respective papers, without any specification of the names of the accused, or of the crimes with

which they were charged. This most arbitrary process, although not unprecedented, was unquestionably illegal; and, except in seasons of imminent national peril, — such as had induced the government to issue them on two occasions during the rebellion of 1745, — was utterly indefensible. "To enter," argued the great Lord Camden, "a man's house by virtue of a nameless warrant, in order to procure evidence, is worse than the Spanish Inquisition; a law under which no Englishman would wish to live an hour. It is a daring public attack upon the liberty of the subject, and in violation of the twenty-ninth chapter of Magna Charta, which is directly pointed against that arbitrary power." Again the illustrious lawyer observed: "If the other judges and the highest tribunal in this kingdom, the House of Lords, shall prove my opinions erroneous, I submit, as will become me, and kiss the rod; but I must say that I shall always consider it as a rod of iron for the chastisement of the people of Great Britain."

It was by virtue of this infamous warrant that, on the night of the 29th of April, Wilkes's house in Great George Street, Westminster, was suddenly entered by three messengers from the secretary of state's office, and his papers seized. At the same time, no fewer than forty-nine other persons were taken into custody. Wilkes himself was arrested on the following morning in the streets, and carried, in the first instance, to his own residence. Here,

among other friends, he was promptly visited by his intimate associate in licentiousness and wit, Charles Churchill, the poet, who, as Wilkes had been apprised, was among the persons proscribed. Happily the quick intelligence of Wilkes enabled him to perceive that Churchill's person was unknown to the messengers, and accordingly, by addressing him as Mr. Thomson, he contrived to save him from a prison.

From Great George Street Wilkes was conducted into the formidable presence of the Earls of Halifax and Egremont, the former of whom had signed the order for his arrest. The latter, a well-bred but proud and obstinate peer, is said to have had his dignity much discomposed by the effrontery with which Wilkes demeaned himself toward him personally, as well as by the easy indifference with which he treated the whole proceeding, even though the result was his committal to the Tower. "Your lordship," he plainly told the earl, "is very ready to issue orders which you have neither the courage to sign, nor, I believe, to justify." Subsequently Wilkes challenged Egremont to single combat; but, before the day was fixed for their meeting, the haughty earl had ceased to exist. To Lord Temple Wilkes writes, on the 19th of August: "The account I had to settle with Lord Egremont is at length in another way put an end to; and, as a Frenchman would say, *il m'a joué un vilain tour.*"

Both during Wilkes's imprisonment, and while he was under examination before the secretaries of state, his conduct was far more likely to exasperate than to conciliate the government. His wit flashed as sportively as ever. He should prefer, he said, occupying the same apartment in the Tower in which Lord Egremont's father, Sir William Wyndham, had been confined when committed for high treason. The only favour he intended to ask was not to be consigned to quarters in which a Scotchman had been lodged, lest he might become infected by the national disorder of the North. To his young daughter, then in a convent in France, he sent a letter, open, through Lord Halifax's office, in which he congratulated her on living in a free country.

During the first day or two of Wilkes's imprisonment he was treated with great rigour. Not only his friends, but even his counsel, were refused admittance to him. These restrictions, however, having been at length relaxed, he was visited in the Tower by the Duke of Grafton, Lord Temple, and other influential men in opposition; an honour which greatly enhanced his importance in the eyes of the public. At length, having succeeded in obtaining a writ of habeas corpus, he was brought before Lord Chief Justice Pratt, afterward Lord Chancellor Camden, who, without entering into the primary question of the legality of general warrants, pronounced it to be the unanimous opinion

of himself and his brother judges, that inasmuch as Wilkes was a member of the House of Commons he was exempt from arrest for libel, and was consequently entitled to be released from confinement.

In the meantime London had been in a state of the most feverish excitement. Even those who were the most inclined to regard with abhorrence the private and political character of Wilkes felt indignant at the circumstances of his arrest and imprisonment. Accordingly, on the day on which the chief justice delivered his judgment, not only were Westminister Hall and New Palace Yard thronged with anxious and excited thousands, but the result no sooner was announced to them than the old hall rang with such a shout of exultation as had not been heard within its walls since the acquittal of the seven bishops. Ministers, as they speedily discovered to their cost, had committed a most suicidal act. They had not only converted the dangerous demagogue into a political martyr, but had invested him with an importance which, for several years to come, enabled him to set the government at defiance.

The unwise prosecution of Wilkes, or rather the humiliation which his victory entailed upon the Crown, was necessarily highly annoying to the young king. Moreover, he had other reasons for being dissatisfied with the Grenville ministry. The first wish of his heart was to establish a firm,

painstaking, and vigorous administration; yet the Grenville ministry was weakness itself. "There is not a man of the court side in the House of Commons," writes Lord Chesterfield, "who has either abilities or words enough to call a coach." Again, mob-patriots and mob-dictation were the king's especial aversion, yet seldom had popular licentiousness been carried to a more intolerable extent. For instance, in the cider counties, a figure of Bute, clad in tartan and decorated with the blue riband of the Order of the Garter, was paraded about, leading a donkey distinguished by the insignia of royalty;[1] while, at Exeter, so frightened were the magistrates at the attitude of the people, that they allowed an effigy of the earl to hang for a fortnight from a gibbet near one of the principal gates of the city. In the metropolis, affairs wore a still more threatening aspect. A criminal, on his way to execution on Kennington Common, was all but rescued by a mob; nor was it till the military had been sent for, and that night had nearly set in, that the officers of justice were enabled to carry the sentence of the law into effect. It was time — said the king to his first minister — that a remedy should be found for such evils, or the mob would try to govern him next.

[1] "The king," writes Adams, the American envoy, at a much later period, "has an habitual contempt of patriots and patriotism; at least for what are called in this country [England] by those names."

CHAPTER XI.

Attempt of the King to Reconstruct the Ministry — Failure of Negotiations with Mr. Pitt — The Grenville Ministry Insist on Lord Bute Retiring from London — The Duke of Bedford in the Cabinet — Proceedings against John Wilkes, Moved in the House of Lords by the Earl of Sandwich — Popular Judgment on Lord Sandwich — General Warrants Judicially Condemned — Wilkes Expelled from the House of Commons.

It was under the circumstances which we have stated, that the king, to the dismay and anger of Grenville, not only intimated to him his intention of "strengthening his government," but, in opposition to the "positive and repeated" advice of his ministers, commenced a negotiation with the Earl of Hardwicke, to whom he proposed to assign the presidency of the Council. The ex-chancellor, however, declined to act apart from the Duke of Newcastle, and Newcastle refused to act apart from the other "great Whig lords." Most willingly Lord Hardwicke would have persuaded the king at once to reinstate the Whig party in power. Not only, he sent word to the king, had his Majesty's grandfather been compelled to accept administrations which were personally obnoxious to him, but even so great a monarch as William

the Third had been similarly constrained. The king, however, manifested the greatest reluctance to follow the earl's advice. His honour, he said, was at stake. He could never consent to accept a party "in gross."

The king was still hesitating how he ought to act, when the royal closet was invaded by Grenville and his two colleagues, Lords Halifax and Egremont, who came to remonstrate with him on his conduct, as well as to demand guarantees for his future good behaviour. Halifax, the most amiable member of the triumvirate, and the most fluent speaker, broke the ice. He was followed by Grenville, who, in language such as kings are rarely compelled to listen to, not only accused him of treason to his ministers, but of having violated an assurance he had given them, that Lord Bute should no longer have secret access to the royal closet. The king, impatient and irritated, demanded ten days for deliberation, promising that if, at the end of that period, he should decide on retaining his present advisers, he would extend to them his fullest confidence and support.

That interval Grenville, with the king's permission, passed in the country. "I have heard Mr. Grenville is at Wotton," writes the celebrated Charles Townshend, "relieving his vast mind from the fatigue of his omnipotent situation; and that for some weeks. Atlas has left the globe to turn upon its own axis. Surely he should be prompt

when public credit labours, and he either mistakes the subject or slights the difficulty. This man has crept into a situation he cannot fill. He has assumed a personage his limbs cannot carry. He has jumped into a wheel he cannot turn. The summer dream is passing away. Cold winter is coming on; and I will add to you that the storm must be stood, for there will be no shelter from coalition, nor any escape by compromise. There has been too much insolence in the use of power; too much injustice to others; too much calumny spread at every turn." [1] Grenville, as appears by his diary, quitted London for Wotton on Wednesday, the 3d of August, and returned upon Tuesday the 18th.

Thus the stipulated interval had passed away, and, on the 21st, the king had intimated to Grenville his intention of retaining his present ministers in power, when the unexpected death, on that very day, of Lord Egremont, gave rise to fresh hesitation in the royal mind.[2] The change, which this

[1] Grenville had recently offered Charles Townshend the post of first lord of the admiralty.

[2] Charles, second Earl of Egremont, expired at Cholmondely House, Piccadilly, on the 21st of August, 1763, at the age of fifty-three. Slight as was the opinion which the king seems to have entertained for his abilities as a statesman, it would appear by the following extracts from Mr. Grenville's diary, that his Majesty was not a little affected by his death. "*Sunday, 21st August.* The king sent many times in the day to inquire after Lord Egremont; at eight o'clock he expired, and Mr. Grenville went with Lord Halifax to the king to give him notice of it. His

event occasioned in the language and manner of the king, escaped not the jealous watchfulness of Grenville, who accordingly deputed Halifax to reason and remonstrate with their royal master. But when Halifax entered the royal closet it had only just been quitted by a far more influential person than himself. The Duke of Bedford, on being apprised of Lord Egremont's death, had hurried up to London, and, having obtained an interview with the king, had represented to him in forcible terms the feebleness of the present ministry, and urged him at once to send for Mr. Pitt. Although the return of the great Whig lords to power was dreaded as much as ever by the king, yet, as he entertained some hope of being able to detach the "Great Commoner" from the alliance, the proposition was not an unpalatable one to him.

Majesty lamented the loss of his servant, and spoke in very high commendation of him. *Monday 22d.* The king spoke of nothing but Lord Egremont and his family to Mr. Grenville, and told him his thoughts must be too much disturbed by this misfortune to allow him to turn them to business, that therefore he did not expect it from him. *Tuesday 23d.* The king again talked of nothing but Lord Egremont, made Mr. Grenville give him a very particular account of his will, and inquired much after all the family." "He" [Lord Egremont], writes Bishop Newton, in his autobiography, "was observed to be remarkably cheerful several days before, and the very morning he died: and it was while he was sitting at breakfast with his lady, and reading a letter, that the fatal stroke was struck. He called for a glass of water, but before it could be given him he was insensible, and so continued till he died."

Accordingly, Lord Bute was authorised by the king to seek an interview with Pitt; not one of those imaginary clandestine ones, such as the suspicious Grenville was for ever picturing to himself, but one, in the open day, at Pitt's own residence in Jermyn Street. During their interview, which took place on the 25th of August, Pitt, after some hesitation, was induced to express his opinion at considerable length on the present state of public affairs. And what, inquired Bute, was there to prevent his expressing himself in similar terms to the king? "My lord," replied Pitt, "I am not of his Majesty's Council: I hold no office in his service, and how, therefore, can I presume to demand an audience? The presumption would be too great." "But suppose," said Bute, "that his Majesty should order you to attend him? You would not, I imagine, refuse?" "The king's command," replied Pitt, "would make it my duty, and I should have no choice but to obey."

On the following day, Friday, the 26th, Pitt received from the king a note, open and unsealed, requiring him to attend him on Saturday at noon, at the queen's palace in St. James's Park. Accordingly, at the appointed hour, the sedan-chair of Mr. Pitt — rendered conspicuous by a projecting leathern boot which gave ease to his gouty foot — was seen passing through the gateway of Buckingham House. Pitt himself remarked of this peculiar

palanquin that it was as familiar to the public as if his name had been painted upon it. The king received him very graciously, and not only listened attentively to him during an interview which lasted for three hours, but appointed a second meeting for the following Monday. According to Pitt, the king's manner on parting with him was that of a person apparently half convinced by the arguments and reasons to which he had been listening. So satisfied, indeed, was Pitt that he had satisfactorily paved the way for the return of the Whigs to power, that, on reaching his own home, he actually sent off despatches to the Dukes of Newcastle and Devonshire, preparing them for the probable event of their being immediately summoned to the royal presence.

In the meantime, Grenville, having some business to transact with the king, had been confounded, on approaching the palace, on perceiving the "gouty chair" of his formidable brother-in-law waiting at the entrance. To add to his mortification, he was kept waiting for two hours in an antechamber, while his rival was closeted with the king. At length, Mr. Pitt having withdrawn, Grenville — who was no less offended with the Duke of Bedford on account of his interference, than with the king because of this his second revolt against his ministers — was ushered into the royal presence. He found the king, as he himself informs us, "confused, flustered," and un-

communicative. "My reception," he writes to Halifax, "was a cold one, and no proposition was made, or seemed likely to be made, either relative to you or to myself." Neither by the king nor by Grenville was any allusion made to the recent visit of Pitt. To Grenville, it afforded an opportunity of expatiating on his own grievances and those of his colleagues, till the king, apparently quite worn out by his tedious diffusiveness, drily intimated to him, by an allusion to the lateness of the hour, that he considered the audience at an end. Yet it was not without emotion that he saw his minister depart from his presence. Twice he said impressively, at parting, "Good morrow, Mr. Grenville!" "It was a phrase," writes Grenville, "that the king had never used to him before." The king, indeed, notwithstanding Grenville's tiresome lectures and perpetual jealousies, would seem to have conceived something like a personal regard for his painstaking minister. When Pitt, at their second conference, proposed to the king to confer on Lord Halifax the lucrative post of paymaster of the forces, his Majesty interfered on behalf of Grenville. "But, Mr. Pitt," he said, "I had designed that for poor George Grenville; he is your near relation, and you once loved him."

The second interview between the young king and the veteran statesman, which took place on the appointed day, Monday, the 29th, unhappily

proved far less satisfactory than the former one. "All tongues," according to Walpole, "were let loose to inquire, guess, invent, or assign causes" for the rupture. Lord Chesterfield, in a letter to his son, admits his inability to discover the truth. "Would you know," he writes, "what it broke off upon, you must ask the newsmongers, and the coffee-houses, who, I dare say, know it all very minutely; but I, who am not apt to know anything that I do not know, humbly and honestly confess that I cannot tell you. Probably one party asked too much, and the other would grant too little." In the unsupported opinion of Lord Shelburne, the negotiation on the part of the court had alike commenced and ended in insincerity. Pitt, however, who was better informed, was of a different opinion. He was not only satisfied, as he told Lord Hardwicke, that the king and Bute were sincere when the latter opened the negotiation, but that the king was even "earnest" for its success. "Were he examined upon oath," he added, "he could not pretend to say upon what this negotiation broke off; whether upon any particular point or upon the general complexion of the whole." The king, he said, listened patiently to his arguments in favour of reinstating the Whig party in power, only occasionally making use of interjections to the effect that his honour was at stake. At length the king suddenly broke up the conference: "I see (or I fear), Mr. Pitt," he said,

"this will not do. My honour is concerned, and I must support it." [1]

In the meantime, Grenville, on the day which intervened between Pitt's two audiences, had received a summons from the king to attend upon him that evening at eight o'clock. On entering the royal closet, he found his Majesty in a state of great perturbation of mind. Mr. Pitt, said the king, had endeavoured to impose terms to him, which, rather than submit to, he would prefer to die on the spot on which he stood.[2] He then explained the circumstances which had induced him to send for that imperious statesman. It was not, he said, that he had any wish to rid himself of his present ministers, whose general

[1] The discrepancies in the accounts which the king and Mr. Pitt severally gave of what took place at their first interview are considered by Adolphus to have been in some degree owing to Pitt's "rapid and commanding eloquence," which prevented the king's fully comprehending at the time the "inevitable tendency of Pitt's arrangement, — that of subjecting the throne to the domination of certain powerful families." On the other hand, the well-known rapidity, and sometimes even confusion, of the king's utterance, when in a state of great excitement, may possibly have induced a like misconception on the part of Mr. Pitt.

[2] "You must have heard," writes the Duke of Bedford, on the 5th of September, "that Mr. Pitt has been sent for, and his friends, the discontented great lords, have followed him to court; but their demands were so exorbitant — I may say insolent — that the king, after having found what ill use they would have made of his moderation, has determined to do without them, and I doubt not his conduct will be approved by the most considerable, and, indeed, all the considerate part of the nation."

conduct he approved, and who had "served him well," but the government, he complained, was a weak one, and he desired to recruit it from the ranks of opposition. As an instance of its weakness, he alluded with evident soreness to the shameful manner in which the lower orders had of late been allowed to set the laws at defiance. He had intimated, he said, to Mr. Pitt, his wish to confer on him the secretary's seals, vacant by the death of Lord Egremont; to appoint the Duke of Newcastle to some high office in the state, and to concede to each statesman a fair share of the distribution of power and place. Pitt, however, according to the king, would assent to no such compromise. He was "a poor, infirm man," he said, "declining in years as well as in health;" his infirmities disqualified him from constant attendance in Parliament; he owed his influence to the good opinion of his friends and of the powerful party with which he was associated; neither he nor his friends would "come into government" except as a party; the vessel of state, freighted as it at present was with Tories, must necessarily sink; it ought at once to be broken up, and an administration formed on true Whig revolution principles.

The demands pressed upon the king by Pitt, at their second conference, were, according to his Majesty's further account, even more exorbitant than those which had been submitted to

him at the first. They were such, he told Grenville, that he had plainly intimated to Pitt that under no circumstances would he accede to them. What those demands precisely were, it would be now no easy matter to ascertain. According to the high authority of the Duke of Bedford, the Whig lords, through their spokesman, Pitt, not only went to such lengths as to insist upon the dismissal from the king's service of such of his servants as had voted in Parliament in favour of the peace with France, but even of those who there was reason to believe were favourable to the measure. "Should I consent to these demands of yours, Mr. Pitt," said the king, "there would be nothing left for me to do but to take the crown from my own head and place it upon yours, and then patiently submit my neck to the block." [1] At this second conference, according to another well-informed contemporary, "the style of a dictator was assumed by Pitt; terms were no longer proposed, but prescribed, and conditions exacted that nothing but the most abject meanness, or most absolute despondency, could assent to. A total *bouleversement* of the govern-

[1] The demand which is said to have been most unpalatable to the king was the appointment of Wilkes's friend — Lord Temple — to be first lord of the treasury. "The treasury for Lord Temple," writes Walpole, "was the real stone of offence." Yet when Pitt quitted the royal closet, it was with the impression that the king had himself proposed Lord Temple for the treasury.

ment was demanded; an universal proscription of all who had served it boldly threatened, with a few invidious exceptions." [1] "It is hardly conceivable," writes the Duke of Bedford, "how they could have the insolence to propose to the king to turn out, by a general sweep, every one that had faithfully stood by him, and to take in all those who had acted the direct contrary part."

In the meantime, the king, by the failure of his overtures, had placed himself in a very humiliating as well as painful position. "My heart," writes Charles Townshend, "bleeds for my sovereign, who is thus made the sport of wrestling factions." The sovereign, as Lord Chesterfield points out, should on no account figure as sole plenipotentiary in a negotiation in which success is uncertain. Loss of dignity must of necessity be the result of failure. "Louis the Fourteenth," adds his lordship, "never sat down before a town in person, that was not certain to be taken." In every respect the king's position was a most unenviable one. Only a few months had passed, since he had emphatically averred that no consideration should ever again induce him to sub-

[1] Lord Barrington also writes to Sir Andrew Mitchell: "All treaty is at an end; the king deeming Mr. Pitt's demands unreasonable, though he was ready to have gone a great way to make everything easy." "Pitt," writes Walpole, "went back to the king with a schedule of terms greatly enlarged." "In talking over the system," writes Lord Lyttelton, "Pitt's demands were thought too high, and rejected."

mit to the dominion of the "great families," yet, as his affairs now stood, he was reduced to the unbecoming alternative, either of retracting his words, or else of courting back to power the tedious and inexorable Grenville. Bent as the Whigs of the last century may have been on enslaving their sovereign, they nevertheless entertained a respect for the kingly office which almost invariably rendered them personally deferential to their royal master. In the closet, even the haughty Pitt was respectful almost to servility, and the powerful Newcastle humble even to cringing. Grenville, on the contrary, instead of endeavouring to win over his sovereign by courtesy and conciliation, had learned to look upon him as a schoolboy. The sovereign, according to his political creed, ought to be nothing more than a mere pageant of state; and he certainly acted up to that democratic axiom. Yet notwithstanding the little consideration which the king had reason to expect from Grenville, he apparently never for a moment regretted his rejection of Pitt's demands. Rather — he told his assembled ministers when he reinstated them — than consent to be enslaved by any class of his subjects, he would endure any extremities; he would even retire to his German Electorate.

In the meantime, if the king had committed a grave error, so also had the several leaders of the two great parties in the state been entirely mis-

taken in respect to the character and motives of their sovereign. As yet, apparently, not one of them had formed an adequate conception of that strong will, that unflinching personal courage, that earnest anxiety to do what was right, and that resolute determination to resist injustice, which afterward — in many a crisis of political or personal peril — so eminently characterised the conduct of George the Third, but which, for the present, were unfortunately counteracted by the drawbacks of a rapid utterance and a nervous manner, as well as by the effects of secluded habits, and an imperfect education. On his accession to the throne, as he himself confessed to Lord North in 1778, he had been "quite ignorant of public business." No sooner, however, did he discover his deficiencies, than he appears to have set himself diligently and anxiously to work to recover lost time; thus acquiring not only those businesslike habits, and knowledge of state affairs and official duties, in which he was subsequently surpassed by none of his successive ministers, but also that familiarity with books which enabled him to converse, on no unequal terms, with the many eminent men of literature and science with whom, during his long life, it was his fortune to come into contact. Even at so early a period as the 5th of January, 1761, we find one of his ministers, William, Lord Barrington, writing to Sir Andrew Mitchell: "Nothing can be more amiable, more virtuous, better

disposed, than our present master. He applies himself thoroughly to his affairs; he understands them to an astonishing degree. His faculties seem to me equal to his good intentions, and nothing can be more agreeable or satisfactory than doing business with him. A most uncommon attention, a quick and just conception, great mildness, great civility, which takes nothing from his dignity, caution, and firmness, are conspicuous in the highest degree." In equal terms of praise, another of his ministers, Charles Townshend, speaks of his good intentions and inestimable virtues.

In the meanwhile, the king's distress at having to receive back the Grenville administration had evidently been acute. The chief obstacle to the revival of a better understanding between him and his ministers was Bute. The prominent part which that nobleman had played, in the late negotiation with Pitt, had rendered him more than ever the object of Grenville's jealousy and suspicion. It was, in fact, Grenville's firm conviction that, so long as Bute was allowed to remain within a day's journey of Buckingham House or Kew, no administration could calculate on being secure for an hour. It was to no purpose that the king promised Grenville his future and fullest confidence and support, assuring him that henceforth he would "take his advice, and his alone." In vain he showed him a letter from Bute, "speak-

ing with the greatest regard imaginable of Mr. Grenville, and advising the king to give his whole confidence to him." In vain he explained to him, that Bute himself had become convinced of the mischief occasioned to the king's affairs by the constant association of his name with that of his sovereign, and had consequently volunteered to "retire absolutely from all business." Nothing would satisfy Grenville, till thirty miles lay between Bute and the scenes of his former influence and intrigues. Moreover, in this undignified crusade against the king and his early friend, Grenville was only too zealously hounded on by his colleagues, the Earls of Halifax and Sandwich.[1] It was only on the condition of Bute's retreat into the country that they consented to continue in office. No consideration whatever was shown him. The ministry grudged him every hour that he remained in London. Less obdurate foes would have taken into account that the fallen earl had a large establish-

[1] "The retiring from the king's presence and councils," writes Sandwich, "is an absolute condition on which this administration stands." "I hope, when your Grace comes to town the middle of the week, that you will press this point with Mr. Grenville, who wants a little spurring in this single article." Again — "Lord Halifax is warm, if that can be, to a fault, with regard to Lord Bute's retreat." One would have thought, from the haughty demands pressed by these persons upon their sovereign, that instead of the Grenville administration being one of the worst and weakest on record, its existence was absolutely necessary for the salvation of the country.

ment to break up; that Lady Bute had no fewer than six daughters to remove from South Audley Street; and further that he urgently needed the privilege of a short sojourn in London, to enable him to complete the purchase of his future princely residence, Luton. It was to no purpose that the king condescended to interfere on behalf of his former minister. Grenville and his colleagues were inexorable. Scarcely more than ten days after they had compounded for his banishment, we find them, at a Cabinet dinner at Lord Sandwich's, arriving at the unanimous resolution that Bute's "retreat must be immediately carried into effect." Nevertheless, Bute continued to linger in London for another month; a delay which, added to his refusal to take up his residence on the Continent, afforded a pretext for depriving him of the post of keeper of the privy purse to the king, which hitherto he had been permitted to retain. The appointment, thus vacated, the king had hoped to have the satisfaction of offering to one whom he had known as a child, and whom he highly respected, Sir William Breton, one of the grooms of his bedchamber. But even this graceful testimony of personal regard was cavilled at by the imperious Grenville. Sir William, he insisted, was a friend of Lord Bute, and the world would attribute the appointment to the back-stairs influence of the earl. This additional demand on the

king's forbearance seems to have been beyond what human patience could endure. "Good God! Mr. Grenville," exclaimed the king, "am I to be suspected after all I have done?" "Not by me," replied Grenville; "I cannot doubt your intentions after all you have said to me; but such is the present language and suspicion of the world." At length Bute really turned his back upon London, and Grenville breathed freely again. The day of the month, and even of the week, are duly recorded by him in his diary: "*Wednesday, October 5th,* Lord Bute went out of town to Luton, in Bedfordshire."

Happily, Bute's departure reconciled Grenville to his sovereign. Henceforth we find repeated notices in the minister's private diary, of the "openness and confidence," and "great ease and confidence," with which the king conversed with him; of his Majesty's "extreme approbation of his conduct," as well as of the pleasure which the king seemed to take in promoting his relatives and friends.

In the meantime, Grenville had succeeded in strengthening his administration by the accession of the powerful Bedford party. The Duke of Bedford was appointed president of the Council in the room of the veteran Earl Granville, and the Earl of Sandwich secretary of state in the room of Lord Egremont. One might have thought that the completion of these desirable arrange-

ments, combined with Grenville being now in possession of the full confidence and support of his sovereign, would have been sufficiently satisfactory to him. But, unhappily, jealousy of Bedford now took possession of his mind. The king did his utmost to remove his apprehensions, and fortunately succeeded. He would uphold him, he said, to the utmost of his power; not only against his political open opponents, but against his colleagues; against the Duke of Bedford himself. When, about this time, Grenville, with no very good taste, chose to revert to the king's recent untoward overtures to Mr. Pitt, his Majesty's rebuke to his minister was alike a mild and a dignified one. "Mr. Grenville," he said, "let us not look back, but let us only look forward: nothing of that sort shall ever happen again." The public, too, by degrees began to do justice to the rectitude of the motives which had influenced the recent political conduct of the king. To Sir Andrew Mitchell, Mr. Erskine writes, on the 27th of September: "The exorbitant demands of the great man were generally condemned; the spirit of the king universally applauded. Even the city begin to change their style, and the three lords, taken in, have the approbation of the public." [1]

[1] The third lord referred to was John, Earl of Egmont, who had been appointed first lord of the admiralty on the 10th of September.

Most unfortunately, Grenville had by this time made up his mind to open a fresh campaign, not only in the House of Commons but in the House of Lords, against Wilkes and the press. Wilkes, it will be remembered, was the reputed, if not the real, author of an obscene and blasphemous poem, entitled "An Essay on Woman," composed in imitation of Pope's "Essay on Man." As Pope had inscribed his poem to Lord Bolingbroke, commencing it with the words, "Awake, my St. John!" etc., so was this impure production inscribed to a beautiful courtesan of the day:

"Awake, my Fanny," etc.[1]

The grossest part of this gross production was the notes, written in imitation of Warburton's commentaries upon Pope's works, and most irreverently professing to be from the pen of that right reverend prelate.

To obtain a copy of this work, and by its means to prosecute and crush the popular demagogue as a convicted blasphemer and libeller, was the paramount object of Grenville and his colleagues. Had their zeal, instead of having for its object the

[1] Fanny Murray, daughter of a musician at Bath, was successively mistress of the honourable John Spencer, better known as "Jack Spencer," and of Beau Nash. She was married to a person of the name of Ross, and died in 1770. The spurious editions of the "Essay on Woman" make the poem commence:

"Awake, my Sandwich! leave all meaner joys," etc.

ruin of a troublesome political foe, been prompted by a true regard for the interests of religion and morality, one might have half forgiven even the unworthy means by which the ministry attempted to secure his conviction. But, as it happened, nothing could be more unjustifiable than those means. Wilkes, it should be borne in view, had made no attempt to foist his obnoxious "essay" upon the public. No single innocent mind had been tainted by its lasciviousness; no single Christian faith had been disturbed by its profaneness. Only thirteen copies had been printed, the circulation of which had been restricted to a few intimate congenial spirits, doubtless as hardened in debauchery as Wilkes himself. Moreover, to prevent publicity, he had printed the work at a private press of his own in Great George Street, which, so long as private documents only issued from it, he had a right to expect would remain uninterfered with by the law. Under the circumstances, the government, as may easily be imagined, had encountered no slight difficulty in obtaining a copy of the work. Sandwich had in all probability received a presentation copy, but even Sandwich, we presume, would have shrunk from converting into a legal instrument of oppression, the confidential gift of a friend. Another copy had fallen into the hands of government at the time of the seizure of Wilkes's papers, but, in this case, the means by which it had been obtained

had been denounced to be illegal, alike in too high a quarter and at too recent a period, to admit of its being turned to the arbitrary account for which it was required. In this dilemma one Kidgell, chaplain to the profligate Lord March, afterward Duke of Queensberry, came to the assistance of ministers, and by means of bribing one of the printers employed by Wilkes, obtained a copy of the poem, which he placed in the hands of the solicitor of the treasury.

Of the men of rank and pleasure who had recently courted Wilkes's company and enjoyed his social wit, one of the most intimate with him, as well as one of the most licentious, was the new secretary of state, the Earl of Sandwich.[1] Yet Sandwich it was, who, with inconceivable baseness and effrontery, now undertook the sorry business

[1] John, fourth Earl of Sandwich, is reported by the Peerages to have been born in 1718. If this date be correct, he must have filled the high situations of plenipotentiary to the states-general, and first lord of the admiralty, either before, or shortly after, he had completed his twenty-ninth year. His appointment as first lord of the admiralty took place in December, 1748; in April, 1763, he was reappointed to that office; in September, 1763, he was appointed secretary of state, and again in December, 1770. In January, 1771, he was placed for the third time at the head of the Board of Admiralty, over which board he presided till the month of March, 1782. "He was a most profligate, abandoned character," writes Lord Chesterfield, "but with good abilities." Besides his fame as a boon companion, Lord Sandwich was distinguished by his passion for music, and was also the author of a "Voyage to the Mediterranean." He died April 20, 1792.

of bringing the "Essay on Woman" under the notice of the House of Lords, with the avowed object of blasting the reputation and ruining the fortunes of his friend. Parliament assembled on the 15th of November, up to which time no suspicion seems to have been entertained by Wilkes of the pitiless storm which was about to burst over his head. On that day, even before the king's speech could be taken into consideration, Sandwich placed his friend's poem upon the table of the House; at the same time denouncing it in a pharisaical speech as a most blasphemous, obscene, and abominable libel. Among those who listened to him with astonished ears was his old Medmenham Abbey associate, Sir Francis Dashwood, now Lord Le Despencer. Never before, he said, had he heard the devil preach. At the requisition of Lord Sandwich, several of the most offensive passages were read aloud, to the great disgust of many of the peers, and of Lord Lyttelton in particular, who is described as groaning in spirit, and entreating that the House might hear no more. But it was the Bishop of Gloucester, the pretended author of the infamous notes, who naturally displayed the greatest anger and disgust. His rage, indeed, was such as to be little in keeping with his sacred profession. The blackest fiends in hell, he said, would not keep company with Wilkes; at the same time he begged pardon of Satan for comparing them together. It

was to the credit of Pitt that, although no one could have a greater horror of vice and impiety than himself, he was the first to raise his voice against the scandalous means which had been resorted to by ministers in order to entrap their adversary. "Why," he exclaimed, "do not they search the Bishop of Gloucester's study for heresy?"[1] Subsequently the lords pronounced the "Essay on Woman" to be a "most scandalous, obscene, and impious libel," and the author guilty of a breach of privilege toward the bishop.

In the House of Commons, the ministerial attack on Wilkes was based on different grounds. Agreeably with a message from the throne, the House took into its consideration the celebrated Number 45 of the *North Briton*, which they forthwith pronounced to be a false, scandalous, and seditious libel; at the same time ordering it to be

[1] Charles Churchill, the poet, not long afterward avenged the bishop's attack on his friend Wilkes by some verses of almost frightful severity:

> "He, in the highest reign of noon,
> Bawled bawdy songs to a Psalm tune;
> Lived with men infamous and vile;
> Trucked his salvation for a smile;
> To catch their humour caught their plan,
> And laughed *at* God to laugh *with* man;
> Praised them when living with each breath,
> And damned their memories after death."
>
> — *The Duellist*, Book 3.

burned by the hands of the common hangman. Wilkes, on his part, detailed, to the indignation of every true lover of freedom who listened to him, the circumstances of his recent arrest, and the seizure of his papers; insisting, as he proceeded, that the privileges of Parliament had been grossly outraged in his person. "On the 30th of April," he said, "I was made a prisoner in my own house by some of the king's messengers. I demanded by what authority they had forced their way into my room, and was shown a warrant, in which no person was named in particular, but, generally, the authors, printers, and publishers of a 'seditious and treasonable paper, entitled *The North Briton*, No. 45.' The messengers insisted on my going before Lord Halifax, which I absolutely refused, because the warrant was, I thought, illegal, and did not respect me. I applied, by my friends, to the Court of Common Pleas for the habeas corpus, and I enlarged on this subject to Mr. Webb, the solicitor of the treasury. I was, however, hurried away to the Tower by another warrant, which declared me the author and publisher of a most scandalous and seditious libel. The word treasonable was dropped, yet I was detained a close prisoner, and no person was suffered to come near me for almost three days, although my counsel, and several of my friends, demanded admittance in order to concert the means of recovering my liberty. My house was plundered, my bureaus

broken open by order of two of your members,[1] and all my papers carried away. After six days' imprisonment, I was discharged by the unanimous judgment of the Court of Common Pleas that the privilege of this House extended to my case." Wilkes's protests and appeals, however, proved of little avail. It was only too evident that his enemies would prove too strong for him. Ruin and disgrace, in fact, stared him in the face.

It was during this day's proceedings in Parliament that a scene took place in the House of Commons which occasioned considerable excitement among the members, and which was very nearly being productive of tragical consequences. It had happened, that, in one of the earlier numbers of the *North Briton*, Samuel Martin, member for Camelford and formerly secretary of the treasury under the successive administrations of Newcastle and Bute, had been grossly stigmatised as a "low fellow and dirty tool of power." This gross affront had not been resented by him at the time; nor was it till the House of Commons commenced their crusade against Wilkes as the author of the *North Briton*, that Martin thought proper to lay before them any complaint of his personal wrongs. He now, however, rose from his seat trembling with rage, and having called the attention of the House to the attack upon himself, denounced the

[1] Robert Wood, under-secretary of state, and Webb, solicitor of the treasury.

author of it, twice over, as a cowardly, scandalous, and malignant scoundrel. It was confidently asserted at the time that Martin had been incited by ministers to act as he did with the deliberate object of taking away Wilkes's life in a duel; nor could it be denied that for many months past Martin, while residing in the country, had been constantly practising at pistol-firing.[1] But, on the other hand, had Martin really desired to fix a duel upon Wilkes, the House of Commons, in which the power of the speaker to prevent hostilities is paramount, would scarcely, one would think, have been selected by him to be the scene of provocation.

[1] "... Should some villain, in support
And zeal for a despairing court —
Placing in craft his confidence,
And making honour a pretence
To do a deed of deepest shame,
Whilst filthy lucre is his aim —
Should such a wretch, with sword or knife,
Contrive to practise 'gainst the life
Of one, who, honoured through the land,
For Freedom made a glorious stand,
Whose chief, perhaps his only, crime
Is (if plain truth at such a time
May dare her sentiments to tell,)
That he his country loved too well:
May he — but words are all too weak
The feelings of my heart to speak —
May he — O for a noble curse
Which might his very marrow pierce —
The general contempt engage,
And be the Martin of his age!"
— *The Duellist*, Book I.

As it happened, Wilkes made no reply at the time, and consequently the House had no excuse for interfering.

Wilkes, however, had no intention of allowing the matter to drop at this stage. "The next day," writes Walpole, "when I went down to the House, I found all the members standing on the floor in great hubbub; questioning, hearing, and eagerly discussing I knew not what. I soon learned that Wilkes, about two hours before, had been dangerously wounded by Martin in a duel." Lords Halifax and Sandwich instantly hurried off with the news to the palace, where they found the king closeted with his first minister. "Somebody scratched at the closet door," writes Grenville, "and Lord Halifax and Lord Sandwich came in to acquaint his Majesty that Mr. Wilkes and Mr. Martin had fought a duel upon words which had passed in the House of Commons: that Mr. Wilkes was wounded, but not dangerously." The leading circumstances of the encounter may be briefly related. A correspondence had taken place early in the morning on the day of the duel, in the course of which Wilkes not only avowed himself the author of the obnoxious paper in the *North Briton*, but added his conviction that Martin's tardy vindication of his honour would never have been made but that he had anticipated the interference of the speaker. Martin, on his part, retorted by again applying to Wilkes the words of

"malignant and infamous scoundrel;" adding that as far as the further epithet "cowardly" was concerned, he was willing to afford him an opportunity of proving whether it was justly applicable to him or not. He further desired that Wilkes would immediately meet him with pistols in the Ring in Hyde Park, where he would wait for him for one hour.

Wilkes was only too well aware how little mercy he had to expect from the government in the event of his killing his adversary, and accordingly, in order to have at hand the means of immediate flight, he proceeded to the ground in a post-chaise. Martin was waiting for him in the Ring, where, as soon as the preliminary arrangements could be made, they took their respective places. At the first exchange of shots Martin's ball went wide of his adversary. Wilkes's pistol flashed in the pan. At the second fire the latter was on the point of discharging his weapon, when the ball from Martin's pistol lodged in his side, and his own pistol dropped to the ground. The profusion of blood which flowed from him created the impression that the wound was a mortal one, and accordingly Martin, much distressed, rushed to his assistance. Wilkes, however, in spite of Martin's repeated entreaties to be allowed to remain with him, insisted on his instantly seeking safety by flight; adding that he had behaved like a man of honour, and that he would never betray him. No less mag-

nanimous was Wilkes's conduct on reaching his home in Great George Street. In order that no evidence, in the event of his death, might appear against Martin, he returned his adversary the written challenge which he had received from him in the morning; refused to divulge the name of the person from whose hands he had received his wound, and further enjoined that, should it prove a mortal one, no prosecution should be instituted by his family. Neither, prostrated as he was by pain and harassed by difficulties of every description, did his accustomed wit and good humour abandon him. When his medical attendant insisted upon the exclusion of all company from his sick-chamber, "I will not admit," he said, slyly, "even my own wife."

Stretched on a bed of sickness, Wilkes had now ample leisure to concert his present plans and consider his future prospects. With a prosecution impending over him in the House of Commons, as well as in the House of Lords; threatened with an adverse judgment in the Court of King's Bench, and with the prospect before him of a long and irksome imprisonment, it was plain that England no longer afforded either a safe or agreeable asylum for the discomfited patriot. Thus Grenville, backed by the authority of Parliament and the power of the Crown, had succeeded in defeating him for a time — but the final battle had yet to be fought. Wilkes, it is true, was on his departure to encounter

poverty and exile; yet it was difficult for his triumph to have been greater than at the present moment. He had stood alone in the breach when an infatuated administration had attempted to sap one of the corner-stones of the Constitution. Every true lover of freedom felt himself to be his debtor. Whatever may have been his individual faults, he was, as Lord Chesterfield observes, "an intrepid defender of our rights and liberties." Not only did the great mass of the people of England remain true to him, but even those who most lamented his private vices, and disapproved of his political violence, continued to overlook his backslidings in the disgust which they felt at the treatment he had received from the government. The evident and notorious fact that revenge, and not the interests of religion, had prompted the late prosecution in the House of Lords; the needless indecency with which the ears of that grave assembly had been polluted by the revelation of impurities which had been intended solely for the private entertainment of a dozen graceless men of pleasure; and lastly the very indifferent private reputations of Sandwich, and of the other government informers, enlisted advocates on behalf of Wilkes even among the most virtuous of the community.

It was upon Sandwich, indeed, that the main torrent of public indignation and disgust very righteously poured. Even his own friends and supporters, on any allusion being made to his

canting philippic in the House of Lords, were scarcely able to suppress a titter. Some time afterward, Thomas Townshend proceeded to such lengths in the House of Commons as to denounce him as the "most profligate sad dog in the kingdom." The wicked earl was in the House at the time; a fact of which Townshend seems to have been cognisant. "He hoped," he added, "that he was present, and if he was not, he was ready to call him so to his face in any company." Yet not only was Sandwich himself about this time expelled the Beaf Steak Club for blasphemy, but within little more than a fortnight — at a club to which Wilkes and he severally belonged, "composed of players and the loosest revellers of the age" — they had sat together bandying ribald wit and listening to obscene catches. It was at one of these debauched jollifications that Lord Sandwich put the impudent and well-known question to Wilkes whether he expected to end his career by being hanged or from the effects of a scandalous disorder which he tersely named. "My lord!" was the admirable reply, "that might much depend upon whether I embraced your lordship's mistress or your principles."[1] Whenever Sandwich appeared in public,

[1] The credit of having originated this once celebrated witticism was formerly claimed by the French. It was a retort, according to French authority, of Mirabeau to Cardinal Maury, while seated next to him in the National Assembly. Wilkes's prior claim to it has, however, been established by Lord Brougham. "I heard it myself," he writes, "from the Duke of

popular scorn followed him. It happened that a few days after the debate in the House of Lords, the "Beggars' Opera" was performed at Covent Garden Theatre. The play passed off quietly till toward its close, when Macheath exclaims: "That Jemmy Twitcher should peach me, I own surprised me."[1] It would have been a dull audience not to have comprehended at once the affinity between Jemmy Twitcher and the renegade secretary of state, and accordingly there arose simultaneously from gallery, and pit, and boxes, a cry of "Jemmy Twitcher! Jemmy Twitcher!" — a name by which, during the remainder of his days, Lord Sandwich was as familiarly known as by the title which he had derived from his forefathers. In the eyes of college dignitaries alone, he seems to have found favour. When, in March following, he was a competitor, with a highly accomplished and respectable nobleman, Philip, second Earl of Hardwicke, for the honour of being elected high steward of the University of Cambridge, he was defeated only by one or two doubtful votes. Happily the youth of the university in some degree retrieved its credit. The earl having, in the course of the following month, been invited to dine at Trinity

Norfolk, who was present when the dialogue took place, many years before the French Revolution."

[1] "That Jemmy Twitcher should peach me I own surprised me. 'Tis a proof that the world is all alike, and that even our own gang can no more trust one another than other people."

— *Act iii. Scene 4.*

College, the undergraduates made his appearance the signal for retiring from the hall.[1] If anything was wanted to complete the popular odium which rested on Sandwich at this period, it was effected by the powerful and withering verse of Churchill.[2]

[1] The conduct of the undergraduates naturally gave much offence to their superiors. The following were the names of the recusants: Phillips, Davies, Cotton, Neale, Fox, Jones, Wilbraham, Marwood, Shippersdon, Spranger, Cobbold, Norris, Paddey, Bennett, Frank, Clowes, Campbell, Hardinge, Graham, Brisco, Abbot, Ellis, Kershaw, Mattey, Harrison, Pinnock, Popham, Ridgill, Twisden, Smyth, Kreyk, Clutterbuck, Daniel, Hills, Panton, Dobson, Davidson, Churchill, Carter, Scafe, Butcher, Langley Bird, Green, Lake, Wright. It was on the occasion of Lord Sandwich coming forward as candidate for the high stewardship of the University of Cambridge, that Gray, the poet, composed his bitter verses, entitled "The Candidate, or, The Cambridge Courtship":

> "When sly Jemmy Twitcher had smugged up his face,
> With a lick of court whitewash, and pious grimace,
> A-wooing he went," etc.

[2] "Nature designed him in a rage
To be the Wharton of his age;
But having given all the sin,
Forgot to put the virtues in.
To run a horse, to make a match,
To revel deep, to roar a catch;
To knock a tottering watchman down,
To sweat a woman of the town;" etc.

. . . . . .

"His bills sent in, too great to pay,
Too proud to speak to, if he meets
The honest tradesman whom he cheats.
Too infamous to have a friend,
Too bad for bad men to commend."

— *The Duellist*, Books 1 and 3.

In the meantime, Wilkes had not been forgotten in his sick-chamber. Every opportunity was seized by the people of deifying their idol, and at the same time of throwing insult on the government. A significant proof of this state of the public feeling was afforded on the 3d of December, the day appointed for the unwise measure of publicly burning Number 45 of the *North Briton*. The hangman was about to commit the paper to the flames, when suddenly a universal shout of "Wilkes and liberty" arose from the dense crowd of persons who had assembled in front of the Royal Exchange. Almost as suddenly the peace officers were put to flight. Men, evidently of superior birth and education, goaded on the mob from the balconies and windows of the neighbouring houses. One of the glass-windows of the sheriff's coach was smashed, and he himself wounded in the face by a burning brand; and lastly, in lieu of the *North Briton*, which was wrested from the hangman, a jackboot and a petticoat were flung into the flames, amidst the exulting cheers of the multitude.

Three days afterward, in Westminister Hall, Wilkes gained a victory of a more creditable kind. After a hearing which lasted for fifteen hours, a special jury returned a verdict against the under-secretary of state, Robert Wood, for the illegal seizure of Wilkes's papers; at the same time awarding the plaintiff one thousand pounds dam-

ages, and full costs. It was on this occasion that Lord Camden confirmed his famous judgment against the legality of general warrants. The righteousness of that judgment was appreciated throughout the length and breadth of the land. The corporations of Dublin, Bath, Exeter, and Norwich enrolled the name of the lord chief justice among those of their freemen; while the citizens of London not only presented him with its freedom, but, under a portrait of him by Sir Joshua Reynolds, which they suspended from the walls of Guildhall, they placed the following graceful and flattering inscription: "In honorem tanti viri Angliæ libertatis lege assertoris" — "in honour of so eminent a man, the assertor by the law of English liberty." Some months previously to Wilkes gaining his celebrated verdict, one of the printers of the *North Briton* obtained three hundred pounds damages in the Court of Common Pleas against the messengers of the secretary of state's office, on account of the illegal seizure of his person by general warrant. At a later period, the abstract question of the legality of general warrants came before Lord Mansfield, who affirmed the judgment previously pronounced by Lord Camden.

In the meantime, Grenville and his colleagues, too infatuated to profit by these unmistakable and alarming demonstrations of public opinion, continued to persist in their untoward persecution of

Wilkes. From both Houses of Parliament they obtained the fullest support. The Commons cited him to appear at the bar of their House, and, on his pleading his inability to obey the summons, on account of the severity of his wound, Doctor Heberden, the physician, and Hawkins, the surgeon, were ordered to visit him. Wilkes, however, by boldly refusing to admit the parliamentary doctors into his presence, put a fresh affront upon the government. The House, he said, had ordered them to attend him, but it had forgotten to order him to receive them. Accordingly, ministers were about to propose more stringent measures to enforce his appearance, when, leaving his enemies to wreak their vengeance upon him in the form of outlawry and confiscation, he suddenly made good his escape to France.[1]

On the 20th of January, 1764, Wilkes was expelled the House of Commons with scarcely

[1] The House of Commons evidently entertained strong doubts in regard to the serious nature of Wilkes's wound, — doubts which his, apparently easy, flight to the Continent tended to confirm. Yet it was in opposition to the remonstrances of his medical attendants that he even quitted the house. To Lord Temple he writes, on the 25th December, immediately after his arrival at Calais: "Even here I will breathe the free spirit of an Englishman. I suffered a good deal, by the rude jolting of the chaise, through the cursed town of Rochester, and through Dover;" and he adds, "If I may talk of myself for a moment, like a true Frenchman, I should say that I am better than I feared for this poor carcase yesterday. The lips of my wound are much inflamed by the violent exercise, and I was so extremely sick in the passage, that I have strained myself greatly."

a dissentient vote; a measure which was followed up, four days afterward, by the House of Lords voting him to be the author of the "Essay on Woman," and issuing orders for the seizure of his person. That he was not forgotten in his exile, any more than he had been in his sick-chamber, is certain. For instance, when, fourteen months after his flight, Williams, the printer, was placed in the pillory for daring to republish Number 45 of the *North Briton*, the spectators not only presented him with two hundred guineas, which they had subscribed amongst themselves, but, after having erected a gibbet on which they suspended a boot and Scotch bonnet, carried off the delinquent in triumph in a hackney-coach correspondingly numbered, 45.

In a despotic country like France, the arrival of so bold an enemy to courtiers and courts as Wilkes must necessarily have excited some sensation. Madame de Pompadour once put the question to him, how far he considered that a libeller in England could with impunity abuse the royal family. "Madame," he replied, "this is exactly what I am trying to find out."

CHAPTER XII.

Personal Feeling of the King in Wilkes's Case — Parliamentary Provision for the Queen — Birth of Prince Frederick, Afterward Duke of York — Domestic Life of the Royal Family — The King's Kindness to Lady Molesworth's Family in a Season of Great Affliction — Simple Tastes and Benevolent Disposition of the Queen — Marriage of Princess Augusta with the Prince of Brunswick — Coolness of the Court toward the Prince and Princess — Enthusiasm of the People — Gaming at Court Prohibited — Diplomatic Duel Prevented by the King.

At the head of those who instigated the unjustifiable proceedings against Wilkes in Parliament was now, it is to be feared, the young king himself. He not only completely approved of the dismissals from the army and civil service of such members of Parliament as had voted against government on the questions of Wilkes and general warrants, but, in the particular instances of the removal of Gen. Henry Conway, brother of the Earl of Hertford, from his office of groom of the bedchamber and the command of his regiment of dragoons, and of Mr. Fitzherbert from his seat at the Board of Trade, he was the person who proposed and occasioned those measures being carried into execution. To his first minister he

writes, on the 18th of February, 1764: "Firmness and resolution must now be shown, and no one's friend saved who has dared to fly off. This alone can restore order, and save this country from anarchy; by dismissing, I mean not till the question is decided; but I hope in a fortnight that those who have deserted may feel that I am not to be neglected unpunished." It is true that the king had every reason to feel abhorrence of Wilkes, as well on account of his blasphemies and profligacies, as his being the inciter of insurrection and riot, and the cruel defamer of his mother's reputation. True also it is, that Sir Robert Walpole had formerly dismissed Lords Westmoreland and Cobham from the command of their regiments, and had deprived Pitt — "that terrible cornet of Blues," as he styled him — of his commission, on account of their opposition to the government of the day. In those cases, however, the provocation had been much greater; nor, even if they had been precisely similar, would it have justified the king's unconstitutional attempt to influence the proceedings of Parliament, or the personal part which he took in instituting an arbitrary proscription.

In the meantime Parliament had settled £100,000 a year on the queen in the event of her surviving her consort, and the queen had personally curtsied her thanks to Parliament. In addition to this magnificent dowry, Richmond Old Park and Lodge, on the banks of the Thames, — the

retreat of Wolsey in the days of his disgrace, and afterward the last home on English ground of the rebel Duke of Ormond, — were set apart as her suburban residence in the event of a demise of the Crown. The London residence apportioned to the young queen was the old palace of the Protector Somerset in the Strand, the same which, since the days of Anne of Denmark, had been set apart as the jointure-house of the queens of England. Subsequently the king exchanged it for what had been formerly the residence of the Sheffields, Dukes of Buckingham, in St. James's Park, the fair lawns and shrubberies of which bordered, in 1763, on the open country. It may be here stated, that whenever the king's private letters and notes — many of which will, from time to time, be introduced into these pages — bear the superscriptions of "Richmond Lodge" and the "Queen's House," they denote severally "Ormond Lodge," at Richmond, and the old red brick mansion of the Sheffields, long since demolished, which many persons will remember standing on the site of the present Buckingham Palace.[1] Henceforth the "Queen's House" became the favourite and constant London residence of the king and queen. Here, during the first years

[1] Buckingham House, which had been purchased of Sir Charles Sheffield by George III. for the sum of £21,000, was settled on Queen Charlotte in lieu of Somerset House by an act of Parliament passed in 1775, 15 Geo. III., c. 33.

after their marriage, they lived in comparative retirement; and here, on the 16th of August, 1763, — in the presence, we are told, of several lords of the Privy Council and ladies of the bedchamber, — the queen was delivered of her second son, Frederick, afterward Duke of York. The letters, which next follow, announce the birth of the Prince of Wales, an event which we have already recorded.

The King to the King of Prussia.

"MONSIEUR MON FRÈRE :— L'heureux accouchement de la très chère reine, ma femme, qui a mis au monde un prince hier à sept heures et demie du matin, m'ayant rempli d'une juste joye et satisfaction, je n'ai pas voulu prendre du temps à vous en faire part, ne doutant pas que votre Majesté ne prenne un intérêt sincère à cette véritable bénédiction, qu'il a plu au Tout Puissant de répandre sur moy, et sur mes royaumes. Je vous prie d'être assuré que vous me trouverez toujours dans la même disposition par rapport à tout ce qui peut contribuer à votre prospérité, étant avec les sentimens de la plus parfaite amitié,

"Monsieur mon Frère,

"De votre Majesté

"le bon Frère,

"GEORGE R.

"*À St. James, ce 13e Août, 1762.*"

The King to the Queen of Prussia.

"MADAME MA SŒUR: — Je n'ai rien de plus empressé que de vous faire part de la naissance du prince, dont la reine, ma très chère épouse, accoucha heureusement hier matin à sept heures et demie. L'amitié que vous me portez ne me permet pas de douter que votre Majesté ne s'intéresse à la joye vive que je ressens d'un événement aussi heureux et important, comme je vous prie d'être persuadée d'un sincère retour de ma part pour tout ce qui pourra regarder votre bonheur et prospérité, étant avec autant d'estime que d'affection,

"Madame ma Sœur,
"De votre Majesté
"le bon Frère,
"GEORGE R.

"*À St. James, ce 13e Août, 1762.*"

The Right Hon. George Grenville to Sir Andrew Mitchell.

ST. JAMES'S, 13th August, 1762.

"SIR: — You will see by the enclosed *Gazette* the happy news of the safe delivery of the queen yesterday morning; who, by the blessing of God, then brought forth a prince, to the hearty and unfeigned joy of all his Majesty's faithful subjects, which was testified last night in these two great

cities by all the demonstrations that could express their sense of such an important event.

"Her Majesty and the young prince continue both, God be praised, in good health.

"I send you herewith the letter, by which the king is pleased to notify the birth of the prince to the King and Queen of Prussia, with copies, as usual.

"I cannot conclude this letter without adding my most sincere congratulations upon the great and joyful news which I have the pleasure of conveying in it to you.

"Two mails, which arrived yesterday, brought me your despatch of the 21st past, which I have laid before the king, but have no particular commands at present from his Majesty upon the contents of it.

"I am, with great truth and regard, sir,

"Your most obedient, humble servant,

"GEORGE GRENVILLE.

"*P. S.* — I have just received your letter of the 28th past."

It was one of the misfortunes of George the Third that, in the earlier period of his reign, his true character was as little understood by his subjects in general, as it was by his ministers. The retired life which he continued to lead was attributed partly to pride, and partly to jealousy of his youthful queen. In like manner, the king's preference of a simple diet, and the laudable economy

practised in the royal household, were construed into a niggardly penuriousness, which was undoubtedly never one of the failings of George the Third. According to the prejudiced statement of Walpole, such was the "excess of privacy and economy" in which the king and queen passed their time at Richmond, that the beef required for their soup was restricted to four pounds, and the queen's hair-dresser waited on them when they dined. The best answers to these and similar charges of illiberality lie in the numerous instances of unostentatious charity, and munificent support of the arts and sciences, which will be found from time to time recorded in these pages. Of the benevolence of the king's disposition it would be difficult to find a more interesting example than was afforded, about this time, by his conduct to the family of the late Lady Molesworth, on their having been suddenly visited by one of the most terrible domestic calamities on record. When, on the night of the 5th of May, 1763, Lady Molesworth [1] retired to rest at her house in

[1] Mary, daughter of the Rev. William Usher, Archdeacon of Clonfert, had married, in 1743, Richard, third Viscount Molesworth, a union between a beautiful girl of nineteen and a bridegroom of sixty-three. Lord Molesworth in his youth had been aide-de-camp to the great Duke of Marlborough, whose life he saved at the battle of Ramillies at the risk of losing his own. He died, holding the rank of field-marshal, on the 12th of October, 1758, leaving one son and eight daughters, of whom two of the latter were by a previous marriage.

Upper Brook Street, Grosvenor Square, her family and household consisted altogether of some fifteen or sixteen persons, including six young unmarried daughters. Before daybreak eight of these persons had perished by a miserable death. Lady Molesworth was in bed with her eldest daughter, Henrietta, in a front room on the second floor, when, about four o'clock in the morning, she was roused from her sleep by the alarm of fire. Escape by the stairs was rendered impossible. Before any of the inmates of the house had notice of the fire they were enveloped in flames and smoke. In the agony of her fright, Miss Molesworth threw up the sash of the window, and, flinging herself toward the street, fell on the pointed iron railings beneath, and thence into the area. It was subsequently ascertained that she had fractured her leg in two places. Whether Lady Molesworth met her death from suffocation, or whether she sank with the falling floor, amongst the ruins of which her bones and ring were subsequently discovered, was never ascertained. For some seconds she was seen standing in her nightdress at the window, evidently in a dreadful state of terror and despair, and then, while in the act of lifting up her hands, she suddenly disappeared and was seen no more.[1] In a back room, on the

[1] The fate of Lady Molesworth excited universal sympathy. Horace Walpole writes to General Conway, 6 May, 1763: "The catastrophe is shocking beyond what one ever heard; and

same floor, slept a brother of the late viscount, Doctor Molesworth, and his wife. The latter flung herself out of window, and happily alighted on a mattress which her husband had previously had the presence of mind to throw into the yard below. The doctor, who was advanced in years, appears to have wanted sufficient resolution to take the leap, and accordingly, while the flames were raging within, he clung to a hook affixed to the outward wall, till, just as his strength was beginning completely to fail him, a ladder was brought by which he was enabled to effect his escape. Every apartment in the house presented a scene of distress and dismay. The second and third daughters of Lady Molesworth, Melosina and Mary, aged severally about sixteen and fifteen years, perished in the flames. In the meantime, the neighbours had spread mattresses and feather-beds on the pavement in the front of the house, at one of the upper windows of which — watched with intense interest by the crowd — appeared two

poor Lady Molesworth, whose character and conduct were the most amiable in the world, is universally lamented." Again Walpole writes to Sir Horace Mann, on the 10th: "The general compassion on this dreadful tragedy is much heightened by the very amiable character of Lady Molesworth. She had been a very great beauty, and was still a most pleasing woman, not above forty." "I have wept," writes Countess Cowper, on the 10th, "over poor Lady Molesworth and her children. What a dreadful catastrophe! I did not visit her, but knew her and her eldest daughter very well by sight. 'Tis really too shocking; I shall be more afraid of fire than ever."

younger sisters, Louisa, afterward successively Baroness Ponsonby and Countess Fitzwilliam, and Elizabeth. "Sister," said the eldest, frightened at the height from which she had to leap, "push me and jump after me, for I have not courage to jump myself." The other did as she was bid and immediately followed her; the result being that, though they both fell upon feather-beds, the elder sister had her thigh broken, while the other escaped with some unimportant bruises. At the same time, a scene of similarly exciting interest was taking place at the back part of the house. In one of the rooms in the garret slept the French governess with Lady Molesworth's youngest daughter, Charlotte, a child less than eight years of age. On the alarm being given, the latter, with a presence of mind beyond her years, contrived to reach the roof of the house from the window, but finding her further progress prevented by chimneys and spikes, was compelled to make good her retreat to the apartment. There was now no chance of escape for either, but to leap from the window. The governess was the first to throw herself out, and was killed on the spot. The child followed, fell on the mattress which had been thrown down by Doctor Molesworth, and fortunately escaped without having suffered any very material injuries. Some one endeavouring to assure her that her governess was safe: "Do not," she replied, "pretend to make me believe that, for I saw her dead

on the pavement and her brains scattered about." A similar attempt was made to keep her in ignorance of her mother's death, but also to no purpose. Unluckily the poor child overheard some of the servants speaking of it in an adjoining apartment, and was so affected as to refuse food for two days.

In addition to these casualties, a brother of Lady Molesworth, Captain Usher, and three servants, lost their lives; one of the latter, a noble fellow, perishing in the gallant attempt to save others. Fortunately Lord Molesworth, a youth of fifteen, who had passed the preceding night in Brook Street, had on the following morning returned to Westminster School.

This terrible catastrophe, as we have already represented, excited the generous sympathies of the young king. Having learned that, with the death of Lady Molesworth, had ceased the pension which she had enjoyed as the widow of a field-marshal, and consequently that her surviving children were left but ill provided for, the king not only sent them a considerable sum of money for their present use, but also ordered a house to be procured for them, which he took a pleasure in furnishing at his own expense. Moreover, not satisfied with securing to them the same amount of pension as had been enjoyed by their late mother, he increased it by an additional £200 a year.

With reference to the fate of the survivors of this painful tragedy, the story of the eldest — who, it will be remembered, had fractured her leg in two places — alone possesses any remarkable interest. The adjoining house, into which she was received, happened to be that of Lady Grosvenor, whose son, Lord Grosvenor, was supposed to have formed an attachment for the young lady. Lord Grosvenor, having been informed that a fire was raging in Upper Brook Street, had lost no time in hurrying to his mother's residence, which he reached just as the mutilated girl was being carried into the hall. She partially recognised him and prayed him to take care of her. A surgeon was sent for, who, on his arrival, found her insensible, and while she was in this state deemed it expedient to amputate her leg. For some weeks she continued in so precarious a condition that it was found necessary to deceive her, not only in respect to the fate of her mother and sisters, but also to conceal from her, if possible, the fact of the operation which she had undergone. With this object, a false leg of bandaged pasteboard was attached to the remains of the severed limb; a device which fortunately answered the purpose intended. Once only, a little sister, who was permitted to approach her bedside, very nearly allowed the truth to escape. "Oh, poor Harriet!" she exclaimed, "they tell me your leg is cut off." But even this blunt announcement of the fact failed to undeceive

the invalid. "No," she replied, "it is not." The truth, however, could not always be kept a secret, and accordingly it was at length broke to her by an affectionate female relative, in a manner equally ingenious and delicate. Having by degrees taught her to believe that the wound was getting worse, and that amputation might probably be necessary, she was at last brought to express a wish that the operation was over. Some natural tears followed the announcement; but her predominant feelings were those of gratitude and satisfaction. "Thank God!" she said, "it is not my arm, for now I can still amuse myself."

During these days of pain and sadness, Lord Grosvenor not only behaved with the greatest kindness and attention toward his mother's guest, but, it is said, placed in the hands of her guardian a considerable sum of money for her use; at the same time insisting that she should never be informed of the source whence it was derived. Here, however, his attentions ended. The following year he gave his hand to a daughter of the house of Vernon, whose name also happened to be Henrietta. For some time, disappointment and mis fortune seem to have pursued Miss Molesworth. She was riding, a year or two afterward, with a young nobleman to whom she was engaged to be married, when to her horror she beheld him thrown from his horse and killed on the spot. She subsequently, in 1774, married the Right Honourable

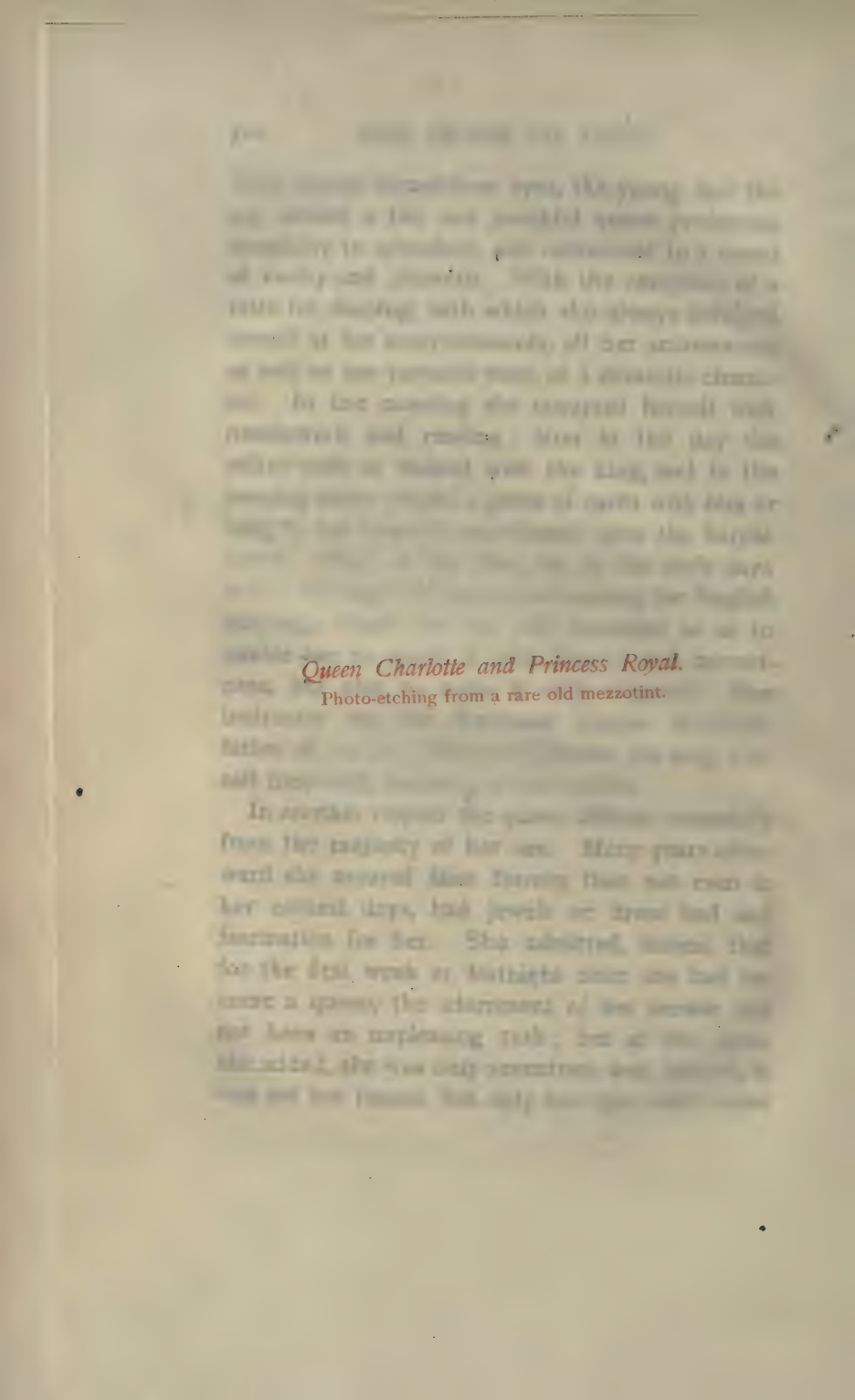
John Staples, grandson of Sir Robert Staples, Baronet, by whom she became the mother of several children.

Having had occasion to draw attention to the better qualities of George the Third, it is but right that similar justice should be done to his consort. Virtuous, prudent, amiable, and unostentatiously pious, her pure example went far to effect that amendment in public morals, and especially in the tone of high society, for which even her maligners have given her the highest credit. "You do not know the character of the queen," writes Lord Chesterfield to his son. "Here it is. She is a good woman, a good wife, a tender mother, and an unmeddling queen. The king loves her as a woman, but, I verily believe, has never yet spoken one word to her about business." In acts of charity and benevolence, the queen followed in the footsteps of her husband. In the course of the year 1763, we find her purchasing a house and grounds in Bedfordshire, which she subsequently endowed as an asylum for the daughters of decayed gentlemen; nor let it be forgotten that she was not only a subscriber to the Magdalen Hospital, but, overcoming the prejudices which many of her sex had conceived against that asylum for female frailty, nobly consented to become its patroness.

Devoted to the king, and formed for the enjoyment of domestic life, the queen had readily fallen into the habits which were most congenial to him.

With almost incredulous eyes, the young and the gay beheld a fair and youthful queen preferring simplicity to splendour, and retirement to a round of vanity and pleasure. With the exception of a taste for dancing, with which she always indulged herself at her entertainments, all her amusements as well as her pursuits were of a domestic character. In the morning she occupied herself with needlework and reading; later in the day she either rode or walked with the king, and in the evening either played a game of cards with him or sang to her own accompaniment upon the harpsichord. Much of her time, too, in the early days of her marriage, was passed in learning the English language, which she not only mastered so as to enable her to speak it with fluency and correctness, but also to write it with elegance. Her instructor was the Reverend Doctor Majendie, father of the late Bishop of Chester, the king himself frequently assisting at her studies.

In another respect the queen differed materially from the majority of her sex. Many years afterward she assured Miss Burney that, not even in her earliest days, had jewels or dress had any fascination for her. She admitted, indeed, that for the first week or fortnight after she had become a queen, the adornment of her person had not been an unpleasing task; but at that time, she added, she was only seventeen, and, besides, it was not her reason, but only her eyes which were



Queen Charlotte and Princess Royal.
Photo-etching from a rare old mezzotint.

dazzled. "She told me, with the sweetest grace imaginable," writes Miss Burney, "how well she had liked at first her jewels and ornaments as queen; 'but how soon,' she cried, 'was that over! Believe me, Miss Burney, it is a pleasure of a week — a fortnight, at most — and to return no more. I thought, at first, I should always choose to wear them; but from the fatigue and trouble of putting them on, and the care they required, and the fear of losing them, believe me, in a fortnight's time I longed again for my own earlier dress, and wished never to see them more!'"

Of the numerous brothers and sisters of George the Third, the eldest was the Princess Augusta, who, on the 31st of July, 1763, had completed her twenty-sixth year. Her manners were lively and engaging; her complexion beautiful. In childhood her loveliness had been remarkable, but before she attained to womanhood its bloom had passed away. "Lady Augusta," writes Horace Walpole, "was not handsome, but tall enough and not ill-made," with the German whiteness of hair and complexion so remarkable in the royal family, and with their precipitate yet thick Westphalian accent." The ruling defect of the princess was a love of meddling in politics, in which her opinions diametrically differed from those of her mother. While Bute, on the one hand, was the idol of the princess dowager, the younger princess, on her part, not only lavished all her admiration upon Pitt, but,

like her brother, the Duke of York, boldly and openly inveighed against the policy of the court. So ardent a politician was likely to set a troublesome example to her younger brothers and sisters; nay, the queen herself, it was feared, might possibly be infected with the zeal of her sister-in-law. Under these circumstances, the princess dowager resolved to look out for a foreign husband for her daughter, and thus remove her to a distance from the scene of her present political vagaries.

The prince whom the British court fixed upon, as the most eligible consort for the Princess Augusta, was Charles William Ferdinand, Hereditary Prince of Brunswick Wolfenbuttel, a favourite nephew, and pupil in the art of war, of Frederick the Great of Prussia. Though only in his twenty-ninth year, he had long since earned for himself a considerable military reputation at the battle of Hastenbeck, which more recently he had improved by the courage and ability displayed by him at the siege of Crefeld. His manners were remarkably prepossessing; his figure slight and graceful; his countenance, which wore a weather-worn and soldier-like look, was remarkably handsome. This is the same Duke of Brunswick who, forty-three years afterward, died of the wounds which he received at the battle of Jena, and the father of the no less gallant Duke Frederick William, who lost his life at the battle of Quatre-Bras.

The Hereditary Prince landed in England on

the 12th of January, 1764. A marriage portion of £80,000, an annuity of £5,000, — with which the Irish revenue was made chargeable, — and another of £3,000, derived from Hanover, certainly held out no trifling inducements for a German prince to visit England. The prince, who, up to the time of his arrival at St. James's, had not even seen a portrait of his betrothed, expressed himself highly charmed with her person on his being introduced to her. Had it been otherwise, he observed, he should certainly have returned to Brunswick without a wife. The princess, on her part, seems to have been equally well satisfied with her future husband.

Interesting as was the occasion of the prince's visit to England, and notwithstanding his being a stranger in the land, he was treated by the English court with a coldness and neglect which could scarcely fail to attract the attention of the public. The prince, it seems, had been for some time past in the habit of making use of very imprudent language in discussing English politics. More especially his enthusiastic encomiums on the character and liberal principles of Pitt are said to have given offence at St. James's. At all events, whatever grounds for complaint his conduct may have afforded, the king was evidently resolved to render his visit to England as brief, if not as uncomfortable to him, as possible. According to Walpole, almost every precedent of ceremony, which should

have done him honour, was omitted. The custom for the servants of the king and queen to appear in new clothes at a royal wedding was dispensed with; no sentinel was placed at the entrance of the royal apartments which he occupied in Somerset House; no guest sat at his table except with the cognisance of the king, and at the formal invitation of the lord steward.

If, however, the prince met but with a churlish reception from his new connections, very different was the welcome accorded him by the people of England. His reputation as a gallant soldier had preceded his arrival; while the further fact of his approaching nuptials with a princess of England invested him with an additional interest. At Harwich, where he landed, the town was in an uproar. "Mrs. Boscawen tells me," writes Lady Chatham to her husband, "they almost pulled down the house in which he was, in order to see him." At Chelmsford, where he rested a short time, an incident occurred which seems to have flattered and amused him extremely. A Quaker so pertinaciously insisted upon being admitted to his presence, that at last his request was complied with. Taking off his hat, — for the first time perhaps in his life to any one but his Maker: "Noble friend," he said, "give me thy hand: although I do not fight myself, I love a brave man that will fight. Thou art a valiant prince, and art to be married to a lovely princess: love her, make her

a good husband, and the Lord bless you both!" The next morning, observing in the crowd a soldier in the uniform of Elliot's Light Horse, a regiment with which he had formerly served in action, the prince kissed his hand to the man. Every eye, of course, became fixed upon the soldier, who at once became a person of importance. "What!" exclaimed the crowd, "does he know you?" "Yes," replied the man, "he once led me into a scrape, which nobody but himself could have brought me out of again." "You may guess," writes Walpole, who relates the anecdote, "how much this added to the prince's popularity, which was at high-water mark before."

Naturally indignant at the treatment he met with from the court, the prince retaliated by seeking the society of the leaders of the opposition; this being the very object which the king and the princess dowager were chiefly anxious to prevent. Twice he dined with the Duke of Cumberland, who was at this time on the worst terms with the king; and, moreover, he not only paid marked attention to the Duke of Newcastle, who was equally out of favour at court, but arranged that the chiefs of the opposition should assemble and be presented to him at Newcastle House. Accordingly, on the appointed day, about twenty persons of high rank paid their respects to him in Lincoln's Inn Fields, and at his departure attended him without their hats in the rain to his coach.

But the circumstance which, more than any other, was calculated to give offence to the court, was a visit of respect paid by the prince to Mr. Pitt, at his country-seat at Hayes. Of this fact, notwithstanding that it was confidently denied in the newspapers of the day, there exists not the shadow of a doubt. He proceeded thither, it appears, in a hired post-chaise, accompanied only by his chief secretary, M. de Feronce, and two servants. For some reason or other he directed the driver to pull up his horses short of their destination, when, having opened the door of the chaise himself and alighted, he proceeded on foot to the great man's residence, where he was closeted with him for about two hours.

The marriage of the Duke of Brunswick and the Princess Augusta took place in the great council-chamber in St. James's Palace, on the 16th of January, 1764, attended, apparently, with but little splendour. Thirty years afterward, the princess told Lord Malmesbury, at Brunswick, that the only diamonds which she had carried with her out of England were a fine one set in a ring, given her as a *bague de mariage* by the king, her brother, and a pair of diamond bracelets. The queen, she insisted, was extremely jealous of the former gift.

The fact, which had now become notorious, that the prince, like his bride, was violently opposed to the politics of the court, rendered the new-married

couple more popular, if possible, than they had previously been. When, two days after the marriage, the royal family attended the performances at Covent Garden Theatre, the king and queen took their places amidst a sullen silence, whilst the appearance in the theatre of the prince and princess was the signal for more than one round of rapturous applause. "The shouts, claps, and huzzas to the prince," writes Walpole to Sir Horace Mann, "were immoderate. He sat behind his princess and her brothers. The galleries called him to come forward. In the middle of the play he went to be elected a member of the Royal Society, and returned to the theatre, when the applause was renewed." "The acclamations of the theatre, at the appearance of the Prince of Brunswick," writes James Grenville to Lady Chatham, "exceeded anything that ever happened." Again, when, on the following Saturday the royal family attended the opera, the house was no less crowded, and the reception of the prince no less enthusiastic. "The crowd," writes Walpole, "is not to be described. The Duchess of Leeds, Lady Denbigh, Lady Scarborough, and others, sat on chairs between the scenes. The doors of the front boxes were thrown open, and the passages were all filled to the back of the stoves; nay, women of fashion stood on the very stairs till eight at night."

One might have supposed that the Hereditary

Prince, satisfied with these triumphs, would have refrained from seeking to humiliate his royal brother-in-law, in a still more painful manner, in the eyes of his subjects. Whether, however, angry feelings got the better of his sounder judgment, whether his head had been turned by the homage and plaudits of the vulgar, or whether he was eager to ingratiate himself with the chiefs of the opposition, it appears to be certain that, at least on two different occasions, he put affronts on the King of England which no treatment he had met with could possibly justify. Both these occasions are recorded by Walpole. "The duke," he writes, "has dined twice with the Duke of Cumberland; the first time on Friday last, when he was appointed to be at St. James's at half an hour after seven to a concert. As the time drew near, De Feronce pulled out his watch. The duke took the hint, and said, 'I am sorry to part with you, but I fear your time is come.' He replied, '*N'importe;*' sat on, drank coffee, and it was half an hour after eight, before he set out from Upper Grosvenor Street for St. James's." The other occasion, which took place on the Saturday evening that the royal family attended the opera, savours so much of vulgarity, if not vindictiveness, that we would willingly entertain a hope that it was unintentional. "In the middle of the second act," writes Walpole, "the Hereditary Prince, who sat with his wife and her brothers in their box,

got up, turned his back to king and queen, pretending to offer his place to Lady Tankerville and then to Lady Susan. 'You know enough of Germans and their stiffness to etiquette, to be sure that this could not be done inadvertently." The fact is that the king and prince were both to blame. If little excuse is to be found for the king's churlish treatment of his intended brother-in-law, still less justifiable was the prince's impertinent interference with the party politics of a country in which he was a stranger, and his daring to insult a King of England in the midst of his own subjects. But still more reprehensible than the conduct either of the king or the duke was that of the great Whig lords, both in aiding and abetting the prince in his hostility to the court, and in converting his ephemeral popularity into political capital. The latter object, as far as party purposes were concerned, could avail them little, while, on the other hand, it was calculated, as they must have been well aware, to inflict a painful amount of annoyance and mortification upon their sovereign.

In the meantime, the Duke of Brunswick, gratified by the cheers of the multitude, and by the court paid to him by the great opposition families, would willingly have prolonged his stay in a country in which popularity was so easily achieved, and royal merit so immediately discovered. The king, however, as we have seen, had ample reasons for

desiring the absence of his sister and brother-in-law, and accordingly it was resolved to fix them to the day which had been originally named for their departure. That day, the 26th of January, was a gloomy one and the weather tempestuous, yet when the carriage, containing the bride and bridegroom, emerged from the gateway of St. James's Palace, a crowd of kind faces had assembled to smile farewell on them, while prayers and blessings accompanied them on their route to the coast. That night they slept at Witham, Lord Abercorn's seat in Essex, the same mansion which had entertained Queen Charlotte on her first arrival from Mecklenburg. Their quarters would seem to have been most uncomfortable. On the 3d of February Mrs. Carter writes to her friend, Miss Talbot: "Very pathetic are the lamentations made over the prince and princess and their distresses on the road to Harwich. It seems Lord Abercorn had desired the honour of entertaining them, but nothing was accepted but his house. Care was to be taken of all the rest. Such care was taken that when the princess arrived at midnight at Witham, as dark and as cold and as hungry belike as a princess might be, they found neither candle, nor fire, nor food." At supper the princess looked so woebegone as to attract the attention of her husband. "Eh! qu'avez-vous donc, ma chère princesse? Est-ce que vous manquez vos gardes? Nous sommes tous égaux ici. Mais consolez-

vous; quand vous serez à Brunswick vous en aurez." The princess, it is said, smiled and soon recovered her cheerfulness. The discomforts which the royal couple had to put up with were doubtless much exaggerated by what Mrs. Carter styles "minority invention." As a matter of course, they were ascribed to private instructions deliberately issued by the court.

The yacht which carried the prince and princess from Harwich set sail in inclement weather, and before long was overtaken by a tempest. From the end of January till nearly the middle of February no tidings of them reached London, and consequently the most lively apprehensions began to be entertained for their safety. Party malice attributed their peril to the court having driven them away at such a season; and accordingly when, on the 7th, rumours reached London that the yacht had foundered on the coast of Holland, the indignation of the public was exceeded only by its lamentations. "The basket women in St. James's Market," writes Mrs. Carter, on the 9th, "have been most intemperately vociferous in their wishes that all who sent the prince and princess away in such weather were in their places." The opposition as usual made the most of the popular clamour. "Various and ingenious," continues Mrs. Carter, "have been the political inventions of every day. The minority, to have a fair pretence of hanging the

ministry, have sunk the yacht and drowned the prince and princess." That there had been real danger, however, was unquestionable. Horace Walpole writes to Lord Hertford, on the 7th:— "I tremble while I continue my letter, having just heard such a dreadful story. A captain of a vessel has made oath before the lord mayor this morning that he saw one of the yachts sink on the coast of Holland; and it is believed to be the one in which the prince was. The city is in an uproar; nor need one point out all such an accident may produce, if true, which I most fervently hope it is not." Fierce, however, as had been the tempest, the yacht which carried the prince and princess escaped uninjured, and safely landed them at Helvoetsluys, in Holland.

The King to the King of Prussia.

"MONSIEUR MON FRÈRE:— Les sentimens de votre Majesté pour tout ce qui regarde les intérêts de ma maison me sont trop bien connus, pour douter un moment de la part qu'elle prendra à l'heureux accomplissement du mariage, qui vient d'être célébré, entre ma très chère sœur, la Princesse Auguste, et mon cousin le Prince Héréditaire de Brunswick-Luneburg. Votre Majesté me fera la justice de considérer mon empressement à lui communiquer cet événement,

comme une nouvelle preuve de l'estime et de l'amitié invariables, avec lesquelles je suis,

" Monsieur mon Frère,

" De votre Majesté le bon Frère,

" GEORGE R.

" *St. James's, ce 17e Janvier, 1764*"

The King to the Queen of Prussia.

"MADAME MA SŒUR: — Je m'empresse de faire part à votre Majesté de l'heureux accomplissement du mariage entre ma très chère sœur, la Princesse Auguste, et mon cousin le Prince Héréditaire de Brunswick-Luneburg, dont la célébration s'est faite hier; et je me persuade que votre Majesté apprendra, avec une vraie satisfaction, la nouvelle d'un événement si intéressant pour les illustres personnes, qui lui appartiennent de si près. Je saisis avec plaisir cette nouvelle occasion de réitérer à votre Majesté tous les sentimens de l'amitié cordiale, avec laquelle, je suis,

" Madame ma Sœur,

" De votre Majesté le bon Frère,

" GEORGE R.

" *À St. James's, ce 17e Janvier, 1764.*"

It was at Christmas this year, that the immemorial custom of playing at hazard at court on Twelfth Night was, by the king's orders, for

the first time discontinued. This ruinous game, it seems, used formerly to be played indiscriminately throughout the palace; large sums having been lost or won, either by, or else in the presence of the sovereign.[1] Card-playing was in the first instance substituted for the dice-box; but the evil of high play was found to continue notwithstanding the change of pastime, and accordingly the king issued a subsequent order, that, for the future, no gaming whatever should under any circumstances be allowed in the royal palaces.

The following account of a fracas, which took place at court somewhat early in the reign of George the Third, reads rather like a passage from the pages of one of the Tudor chroniclers than an event of modern times. "I think it necessary," writes Lord Rochford to Sir Andrew Mitchell, "to acquaint your Excellency of a disagreeable affair which passed at the ball at court on the 5th instant,[2] and which you will no doubt have heard of through other channels. The Russian ambassador [Count Czernicheff] coming in first, placed himself on the bench next the ladies. The imperial ambassador [Count Seilern] coming

[1] More than one hundred and thirty years previously (9 January, 1633), a correspondent writes to the Earl of Strafford: "I had almost forgot to tell your lordship that the dicing-night [Twelfth Night] the king [Charles I.] carried away in James Palmer's hat £1,850. The queen was his half, and brought him that luck; she shared presently £900."

[2] 5 June, 1769, Lord Rochford's letter is dated the 13th.

in soon after, Count Czernicheff very politely gave him the upper hand. Some time afterward the French ambassador, coming in, stood before the envoys' bench, behind the ambassadors. Count Czernicheff, turning around, entered into conversation with him, when, on a sudden, the French ambassador [the Count du Châtelet] [1] stepped over the bench and pushed himself in with some violence between the imperial and Russian ambassadors. Some very warm words passed between Count Czernicheff and the French ambassador.

The former particularly treated him as an *impertinent.* The Spanish ambassador then coming in, and settling himself quietly amongst the ladies, Court Châtelet beckoned to him to come and place himself next the imperial ambassador, on which the Russian ambassador got up and seated himself between Madame Maltzan and Madame Very. At going away, some warm words again passed, and the Russian ambassador following Count Châtelet, more high words ensued upon the staircase, and they both went together in the Russian ambassador's coach."

The result of the two ambassadors seating themselves together in the same coach was such as may, perhaps, have been anticipated. "Du

[1] "Du Châtelet," writes Walpole, "was enough disposed to assume any airs or superiority. At Vienna, on a former occasion, he had embroiled his court with the imperial by wrong-headed insolence."

Châtelet," writes Walpole, "proposed that they should decide the quarrel with their swords, and they endeavoured to go into St. James's Park, but the gates were closed." Accordingly they agreed to defer the encounter till the following morning, when it was happily prevented by the prompt interference of the young king. "The king," continues Lord Rochford, "out of his great tenderness and humanity, ordered Lord Weymouth and myself to wait on the French and Russian ambassadors to prevent any mischief, which was accordingly done. On Tuesday morning Count Châtelet made a visit to the Russian ambassador, and said how sorry he was such an affair had happened. The Russian ambassador appears personally satisfied with the excuses made for the personal incivility, but considers his court as highly insulted." In consequence of this stupid and bullying affair, the lord chamberlain, by the king's orders, intimated to the different foreign ambassadors that, on future occasions of balls at court, it was his desire that the practice of claiming precedency should be dispensed with.

The king not only took a deep and unceasing interest in the prosperity of his subjects in general, but the welfare of the very meanest of them was not indifferent to him. There is extant, for instance, among the Mitchell MSS. in the British Museum, a letter superscribed, "For his Prescent Mayjesty, King George y^{e} third, London," in

which the writer, an English sailor, states that in the month of May, 1766, while enjoying himself on shore near Memel, he was kidnapped and enlisted against his will into the Prussian military service. Four times over, he informs the king, he has represented his hard case to "his Mayjisty King of Prows in Berlien," but no notice having been taken of his letters, he now, by the advice of "a verry honorowble ould gentleman, a marchant from Ingland," ventures to address "tow or three lines" to his own sovereign. "This letter," the writer concludes, "imust smugle away in toan inglishmans hands that none of the offiscears catsh me with this letter. iam 28 years of agge and 5 foot aleaven in hight, and so no more at prescent, but remain, in prays to the Allmighty for your Mayjesty's long rean, and in peace with all men.

"JAMES RICHARDSON.

"*From the revow in camps in Cenesbourgh May the 31th 1767.*"

Long as is the letter from which the foregoing is an extract, and difficult as it is to read, from the badness of the writing as well as of the spelling, the king, nevertheless, not only took the trouble to decipher it, but ordered an immediate investigation into the truth of the statements which it contained. "His Majesty," writes one of his secretaries of state, General Conway, to the British ambassador at Berlin, "has received a letter by

the post from one James Richardson, an English sailor, who, above a twelvemonth ago, was, partly by force and partly by terror, enlisted in the Prussian service. As the king's disposition inclines him to lend an ear to the complaints of the meanest of his subjects, he perused this letter with attention; and finding in it a remarkable air of truth and sincerity, he directed me to transmit it to you, that you may inquire concerning its grounds and foundation. If the poor man's narrative be found conformable to fact, and if he be enlisted otherwise than from his free choice, it is his Majesty's pleasure that you make application in his behalf to the King of Prussia, and recover him his liberty." The man's story proved to be correct, and accordingly, within six weeks from the date of General Conway's letter, he obtained his discharge. The following is a copy of Richardson's certificate of his release:

"This is to sertify that I, James Richardson, hath got my discharge from lallenboun ridgiment on foot, and hath got one dallar to bear my expences on my way, and a pass, and make the best of my way to owld ingland.

"*Rassllinbourg, September 18th, 1767.*"

CHAPTER XIII.

The Colonial Stamp Act — Strenuously Opposed by the North American Colonists — Passed with Little Discussion — Manifestations of the King's Mental Malady — Intrigues to Exclude the Name of the King's Mother from the Regency Bill — Her Name Inserted.

In the meantime Grenville had been intent upon that most important and indefensible measure of his administration, — the imposition of his famous Stamp Act on the North American colonies. At the time when the short-sighted minister was employed with his clerks at the treasury in arranging his forthcoming budget, how little could he have anticipated the long and bloody war which his financial policy was destined to entail upon his country! How little could he have imagined that there was one schedule in that budget which was doomed to effect a revolution unparalleled in importance in the annals of the human race — that he was lighting up a conflagration which ere long was to blaze from the Hudson to the Mississippi, and the sparks of which, descending upon the thrones of the Old World, were destined to accelerate the great revolution in France, and to induce those terrible proscriptions,

massacres, and wars, which disgraced the cause of freedom at its birth! How little could he have foreseen that from his short-sightedness would spring up that spirit of freedom which was destined to produce a Washington and a Franklin in the New World, and which sent back Lafayette as the apostle of liberty to the Old! Still less could he have imagined that his pettifogging policy was about to give birth to a mighty and rival empire; not an empire feebly struggling into existence, but at once springing forth, like Minerva from the head of Jupiter, armed with the wisdom and thunders of her sire, and destined to bear her giant part in extending over the greater portion of the globe the language, the industry, and indomitable energy of the Anglo-Saxon race.

Such claims on the part of the mother country as those set forth by Grenville, — namely, that she had not only a prescriptive right to tax her colonies, but that she was justified in appropriating the revenue so raised to her own purposes, and for her own benefit, — were certainly not those to which a free and gallant people like the Americans could be expected to submit without a struggle. Grenville, however, who was as devoid of fear as he was of foresight, could perceive no obstacle to the success of his daring and favourite policy. Very different had been the convictions of Sir Robert Walpole, when the project of taxing America had formerly been suggested to that sagacious

minister. "No!" he said, "it is too hazardous a measure for me; I shall leave it to my successors." Again, when Lord Chesterfield discussed the subject with him, he replied: "I have Old England against me, and do you think I will have New England likewise?" Grenville, on the contrary, could discover no direct enactment in the statute book against American taxation, and he looked little farther. It must be admitted, indeed, as some excuse for Grenville, that the amount of sovereign authority which Great Britain had a constitutional right to exercise over her colonies had as yet never been clearly defined. To what extent the prerogative of the Crown, the powers vested in Parliament, and the jurisdiction of the law courts authorised them severally to interfere with, or control the affairs of the colonists, had hitherto involved a problem which, till Grenville took upon himself to sever the Gordian knot, no British minister had had the hardihood to attempt to solve. Moderation in the dealings which Great Britain had carried on with her colonies, and a desire to render their national interests identical, had up to this time been the prudent policy of former governments. Of past neglect, indeed, of their affairs, the Americans had a right to complain; but, to use the words of Burke, it had sometimes proved a "salutary neglect." When the Duke of Newcastle quitted office as secretary of state, it was found that he had left behind him

a closet full of unopened American despatches; while of Grenville it was said that he lost America by reading them.

It was late in the night of the 10th of March, 1764, in a thin House of Commons and just as it was on the point of rising, that Grenville introduced his memorable plan for imposing stamp duties on the American people. Although it amounted in the first instance to little more than a proposition, still it was quite sufficient to arouse the natural fears and indignation of the colonists. The bare fact of its being designated by Grenville an "experiment toward further aid," manifested to what doubtful and intolerable lengths such an innovation might hereafter be carried. The Americans at once perceived the vast importance of the precedent which was sought to be established. They were satisfied that justice was on their side. They felt that the question admitted of no compromise with the mother country, and that now or never was the time for action, for if the principle of right were once to be conceded by them, future resistance might be rendered utterly unavailing. Accordingly, in their numerous memorials and petitions, they urgently inveighed against Grenville's measure, both as a grievous and unsupportable innovation, and as diametrically opposed to the spirit, if not to the letter of the Constitution. They were notoriously, they said, without representatives in the British Parliament,

and it was a fundamental principle of the British Constitution, that taxation and representation were inseparable. What concern had they, they asked, in the continental squabbles of Europe? If the sovereigns of England chose to embark in costly wars on account of their German Electorate, why should they, the inhabitants of the far West, be called upon to pay their share of the expenses? Hitherto, as they reminded the mother country, their loyalty to their sovereign had never been disputed. In former wars, whenever the interests of the two countries had been identical, they had never failed to contribute, to the utmost of their ability, to the public exchequer. Even now, they added, they were ready, at the receipt of a constitutional requisition, to furnish, as a voluntary offering, appliances which otherwise no force should ever wring from them. Unhappily, not only were these arguments and protests entirely thrown away upon the impracticable Grenville, but the earnest petitions of the different Provincial Assemblies were not unfrequently either stifled or ignored. For instance, memorials from the important provinces of Massachusetts and New York, though ordered by the king in council to be laid before Parliament, were actually suppressed.[1] At all events, Grenville carried his

[1] This almost incredible circumstance was doubted at first by the author; but on examining the MS. books of the Privy Council office he discovered, under date 14 December, 1764, the order

point. Early in the month of February, 1765, he formally introduced his fatal Stamp Duty Bill into the House of Commons, and on the 22d of March it received the royal assent.

Considering the vast importance of this celebrated measure, the little attention which it provoked at the time, both in and out of Parliament, becomes matter of interest as well as surprise. In vain we search through the ample contemporaneous correspondence of Horace Walpole for any evidence to the contrary. Although his letters, both to the Earl of Hertford and Sir Horace Mann, profess, to use his own words, to give an "account of our chief debates," yet they contain but one allusion, and that an unimportant one, to the American Stamp Act. Walpole himself subsequently admits that it was a question which, at the time, was "little understood and less attended to." Colonel Barré alone, in a most eloquent

for the memorials in question to be placed before Parliament; whereas he has in vain searched the journals of the House of Lords and Commons for any evidence of the king's commands having been obeyed. "Dutiful petitions," was one of the complaints of the Americans, at a later period, "have been preferred to our most gracious sovereign, which, to the great consternation of the people, we now learn have been cruelly and insidiously prevented from reaching the royal presence." Burke, too, in his famous "Speech on American Taxation," thus speaks of the fate of the Massachusetts and New York memorials: "They were suppressed; they were put under the table, notwithstanding an order of Council to the contrary, by the ministry which composed the very Council that made the order."

speech, vehemently raised his voice against the fatal proposition. "Children planted by your care!" were among his words — "No! your oppressions planted them in America: they fled from your tyranny to a then uncultivated and inhospitable country. They nourished by your indulgence! They grew by your neglect of them. They protected by your arms! They have nobly taken up arms in your defence."[1] Yet Burke could scarcely have been very far in the wrong, when, nine years afterward, he stated in the House of Commons that he never remembered "a more languid debate" within its walls, than that which provoked the dismemberment of the empire. Only three or four members, he reminded the House, had spoken against taxing the colonies; nor had the minority exceeded thirty-nine or forty. "In the House of Lords," added Burke, "I do not recollect that there was any debate or division at all." The fact is, that the great mass of the people of England troubled themselves very little about the matter; while, within the walls of Parliament, a measure that promised to shift the cost of the late war from the shoulders of the taxpayers of Great Britain to those of the unrepresented colonists was pretty certain to meet with favour.

Attempts have from time to time been made

[1] The authenticity of this memorable protest against American taxation appears to be doubted both by Mr. Adolphus and by Lord Stanhope.

to transfer from Grenville to others the odium of having originated the fatal Stamp Act. When, a few years after his death, Charles Jenkinson, afterward first Earl of Liverpool, stood up in the House of Commons and manfully battled the question on behalf of his former patron and friend, there were those present who believed that Jenkinson himself was the real culprit, and that Grenville had been prevailed upon by him to carry the project into law. There were three other persons also on whom it has been attempted to fix this unenviable honour — the one, Grenville's colleague, Lord Halifax; the second, one Huske, an American, and the third an individual whose identity it has been found impossible to establish. Among the Grenville papers was discovered a remarkable letter, dated Turnham Green, July 5, 1763, in which the writer not only proposes to George Grenville to impose "a stamp duty on vellum and paper in America," but actually encloses the draughts of two bills for carrying the proposition into operation. These documents are in the ordinary handwriting of a clerk; the signature only of the projector, one "Henry McCulloh," being in original — a signature, by the way, tremulously ominous of the awful consequences of the policy which it advocated. But, after all, whether the idea of imposing a stamp act upon America originated in Grenville himself, or whether it was suggested to him by others, is

a question of very secondary importance. Grenville unquestionably it was, who first introduced the project to the consideration of Parliament; he it was who, after having devoted twelve months to the deliberate investigation of the merits of this most momentous question, had urged the Parliament of Great Britain to adopt it as law; and lastly, he it was who, to the close of his existence, persisted in defending it as a sagacious and salutary policy. If Grenville, then, was not the author of the Stamp Act, in what other quarter are we to search for the real projector?[1]

On the 12th of January, 1765, the king was seized with an alarming illness, which, as will be seen by the following extracts from Mr. Grenville's diary, lasted till the beginning of April.

"*Sunday, January 13th.* Sir William Duncan[2]

[1] The king himself has been more than once named as the person who suggested to Grenville the taxation of America. There would appear to be no higher authority for this than a statement of Sir Nathaniel Wraxall, whose testimony, unless when corroborated by other evidence, is notoriously open to suspicion. On turning to Nicholls's pages, we find the question treated by him merely as a "matter of doubt;" indeed, Mr. Buckle himself scarcely professes to do more.

[2] William Duncan, M. D., one of the king's physicians, married, 5 September, 1763, Lady Mary Tufton, daughter of Sackville, seventh Earl of Thanet, a connection which probably was the occasion of his being created a baronet on the 9th of August following. Lady Mary was born in 1723. "I must tell you," writes Walpole to Montagu, in April, 1761, "an admirable bon-mot of George Selwyn, though not a new one. When there was a malicious report that the eldest Tufton was to marry Doc-

came to let Mr. Grenville know that he had been with the king, who had a violent cold, had passed a restless night, and complained of stitches in his breast. His Majesty was blooded fourteen ounces."

"*Monday, 14th.* The king is better, but saw none of his ministers."

"*Tuesday, 15th.* Mr. Grenville went to the king, and found him perfectly cheerful and good-humoured, and full of conversation."

"*Monday, Feb. 25th.* The king was blooded, and kept his bed with a feverish cold. Mr. Grenville was confined at the same time."

"*Sunday, March 3d.* The king had a good night, but waked in the morning with a return of fever and pain upon his breast; he was blooded in the foot."

"*Tuesday, March 5th.* The king sees nobody whatever, not even his brothers. Lord Bute saw him on Monday for a quarter of an hour, for the first time, though he [Lord Bute] had desired and pressed to see him before."

"*Wednesday, March 6th.* The king was not so well as he had been; his pulse rose in the morning, but sunk again at night, and he was much better and quite cheerful in the evening."

"*Sunday, March 17th.* The king sent a note

tor Duncan, Selwyn said, 'How often will she repeat that line of Shakespeare:

"'"Wake Duncan with thy knocking: would thou couldst."'"

to Mr. Grenville (differently worded from what they usually were), to appoint him at two o'clock the next day.[1] Mr. Grenville went to the drawing room where the queen told him she was afraid he would not agree with her in wishing that the king would not see his servants so often, nor talk so much upon business. Mr. Grenville told her Majesty that for his part he never wished to break in upon his Majesty. She again repeated that she thought he had better not speak much upon business."

"*Monday, March 18th.* Mr. Grenville found the king's countenance and manner a good deal estranged, but he was civil, and talked upon several different subjects."

"*Friday, March 22d.* Mr. Grenville went to the queen's house to carry a written note for his Majesty, in case he did not see him. The page told him the king was not so well as he had been, and that the physicians had seen him in the morning, and desired him to keep quiet. Mr. Grenville sent up the note, and received the answer in writing. The king was cupped the night before."

"*Monday, March 25th.* The king sent Mr. Grenville a note to appoint him at two o'clock:

[1] The note was as follows:

"SUNDAY, 10 P. M.

"MR. GRENVILLE: — I would have you attend me to-morrow at two."

he found his Majesty well to all appearance; he had been out to take the air."

"*Wednesday, April 3d.* Mr. Grenville received notice from Lord Sandwich that the king was to have a levee. Mr. Grenville went to it; the king spoke civilly to him, and took notice of his having a very bad cold."

To the world it was given out that the king's illness at this time was a cough and fever; that he had caught cold in coming out of the House of Lords; and lastly that, owing to the unskilfulness of his physicians, a humour, which ought to have appeared in his face, had settled upon his chest. His malady, however, — notwithstanding the truth was kept so profound a secret by the court as apparently not to have been suspected even by the prime minister, — is now known to have been of the same distressing nervous character as those which at intervals deranged his reason in after years.[1]

The king's illness occasioned a general consternation. Not that he had become more popular with his subjects, but that the times were preg-

[1] Adolphus, in allusion to the painful nature of the king's disorder, observes: "I did not mention this fact in former editions of this work, because I knew that the king and all who loved him were desirous that it should not be drawn into notice. So anxious were they on this point, that Smollett having intimated it in his 'Complete History of England,' the text was revised in the general impression. A very few copies in the original form were disposed of, and they are now rare."

nant with dangers and discontents. No provision had been made for a regency in the event of his demise, and unfortunately the heir to the throne was only an infant of two years old. The settlement of a regency had, in fact, been most culpably postponed. In vain Lord Holland had formerly urged the importance of the question both on Lord Bute and Lord Mansfield: Grenville and his colleagues had motives of their own for keeping it in abeyance. Fortunately, however, the king had not only good sense enough to appreciate the urgency of the case, but also sufficient strength of mind not to shrink from taking the initiative on the occasion. No sooner, therefore, was he well enough to transact business with his ministers, than he called their attention to the uncertainty of life, as exemplified by his own recent illness; at the same time desiring them to frame such a measure for carrying on the government in the event of his decease as would be likely to meet with the approval of Parliament. Another person, whom the king sent for, to consult with, was the Duke of Cumberland. "I rejoiced," writes the duke, "in seeing his Majesty thoroughly recovered. He said he was; but that yet his late illness had been an additional reason for him to desire to speak to me; for that, though he was now well, yet God alone knew how soon an accident might befall him." In Parliament, the king's disinterested conduct met with all the commendation which it deserved.

"Whilst we contemplate with admiration," say the Lords and Commons in their address, "that magnanimity which enables your Majesty to look forward with a cool composure of thought to an event which, whenever it shall please God to permit it, must overwhelm your loyal subjects with the bitterest distraction of grief, we cannot but be deeply affected with that compassionate sentiment of your royal heart, which suggests a provision for their comfort, under so severe an affliction."

It was the earnest desire of the king, not only that he might be allowed to nominate a regent by will, but also that the name of the person he might select should be known to no one but himself. His object, as he told both Lord Mansfield and Grenville, was to prevent "faction" in the royal family. For instance, had he openly named the queen, it might have given offence to the princess dowager, or, had he named the latter, it would doubtless have distressed the queen. But whatever may have been the king's motives, Grenville naturally objected to investing his sovereign with so great a discretionary power. The two persons whom he most disliked and feared in the world were the princess dowager and Lord Bute; either of whom the king, in the event of his wishes being indulged, would have the power of nominating to the regency. The result of Grenville's objections was a compromise between the sovereign and his ministers; the king, on the one hand, gaining his

object of being permitted to nominate by will, and the ministers, on the other side, stipulating that his choice should be restricted "to the queen or any other person of the royal family usually residing in Great Britain." Such, at least, were the terms which, on the 24th of April, the king, in a speech from the throne, submitted to both Houses of Parliament.

The vagueness of the above proposition, the entire want of all explanation as to what persons ought, or ought not, to be considered as members of the "royal family," could scarcely, we imagine, have been accidental. Surely, for instance, so cautious and experienced a minister as Grenville must have foreseen the certainty of the name of the princess dowager being, sooner or later, dragged before Parliament, and the probability of her title to the regency being made the subject of angry discussion. It was his duty, then, to have rendered the provisions of the bill as clear as possible, in order, as far as was practicable, to prevent the peace of the royal family being disturbed, or the dignity of the Crown compromised. The king not only viewed the matter in this sensible light, but himself pointed out to Grenville the necessity of guarding against any obscurity in the bill. "Every part relating to it," was his expression, "ought to be made as clear as possible."

But Grenville and his colleagues were apparently actuated by private reasons of their own.

The king's recent illness had shown his life to be a precarious one. In the opinion of at least one of his ministers he was in an incurable consumption, and consequently, should he be empowered to nominate his mother to the regency, a few weeks would in all probability see her invested with the sovereign authority, with the detested Bute for her minister. To prevent this dreaded consummation was the primary object of Grenville and his colleagues. To have advised, however, a high-spirited young king to "stigmatise his own mother by act of Parliament," by voluntarily proclaiming her unfitted to be regent, was, of course, out of the question, and accordingly ministers resolved on leaving to Parliament the onus of her exclusion, which they seem to have anticipated as an almost certain event.

The Regency Bill had no sooner been introduced into the House of Lords than it gave rise, as might have been expected, to numberless discussions, disagreements, and disputes. Some of the arguments introduced in the course of debate were curious and entertaining enough. For instance, Lord Lyttelton argued, and very sensibly, too, that to entrust the sovereign with the power of appointing an "unknown person" was dangerous and unconstitutional. The Duke of Richmond wished to be instructed who were the "royal family?" Was the princess dowager of the royal family? Were the king's aunt, the Princess of Hesse — his

cousin, the King of Prussia — his brother-in-law, the Hereditary Prince of Brunswick — to be considered as members of the royal family? Another peer, Lord Denbigh, defined the royal family as all who were prayed for in the Common Prayer Book. Lord Mansfield mysteriously intimated that he had his private convictions on the subject, but declined to divulge them. Lastly, Lord Dartmouth plausibly suggested that the one or two persons, to whom the king would doubtless confide his secret, would have all the plotting and intrigue to themselves. One fact, however, was made manifest by the language of the Duke of Bedford and Lord Halifax, that ministers were resolved, if possible, to exclude the princess dowager. Only such members of the royal family, they argued, were eligible, as were in the order of succession, thus unmistakably repudiating her eligibility.

When, on the 2d of May, the House of Lords reassembled, the discussions and arguments became more confused and complicated than ever. The Duke of Richmond desired to be informed whether the queen was naturalised? The lord chancellor was of opinion that she was naturalised by the fact of her marriage, an opinion which was subsequently confirmed by the decision of the judges. The duke then wished to know if the princess dowager was, or was not, one of the royal family, as if there could be a doubt whether a man's own mother was a member of his own

family![1] Happily, in the midst of these frivolous discussions, the Duke of Richmond rose from his seat and boldly proposed that the House should declare the princess eligible for the office of regent. The question was negatived, and the House broke up.

But, though fortune had so far favoured ministers, they were not without apprehensions as regarded the final success of their scheme. Much as the House of Commons disliked the princess dowager, Grenville was still more an object of their dislike, and consequently there existed the chance of the lower House viewing her pretensions in a much more favourable light than the Lords had done. Under these circumstances, it is said to have occurred to the two secretaries of state, Lords Halifax and Sandwich, that could the king, either by argument or artifice, be induced to sacrifice his mother to the popular outcry, by himself proclaiming her disqualified for the regency, no more difficulty need be apprehended on the part of Parliament. "They conceived," writes Walpole, "that the omission of the princess would be universally approved. They flattered them-

[1] Yet, notwithstanding the apparent puerility of these propositions, we are assured that both the lord chancellor and Lord Mansfield had previously declared their opinion to the king, that neither his own mother nor his own wife were of the royal family. It would seem, however, that the lord chancellor subsequently changed his opinion, and decided that the words "royal family" did include the princess dowager.

selves with acquiring such popularity by that act, that the king would not dare to remove them." According to Walpole's further account, the two earls proceeded to the palace, where they were immediately admitted to the presence of their unsuspecting sovereign. Not a moment — they assured the king — was to be lost: the House of Commons would inevitably strike the name of the princess out of the bill; the best, if not the only means, of saving his own honour and that of the princess was by authorising his ministers to announce publicly in Parliament that he had withdrawn her name from the bill. Unhappily the manœuvre proved but too successful; the king in great distress of mind yielding to the exhortations of his constitutional advisers. "I consent," he is reported to have said to Halifax, "if it will satisfy my people." As the elated earls returned through the antechamber, Halifax whispered to Grenville, who was standing there, that all was right. Grenville himself then entered the royal closet and received from the king an account of what had passed. Halifax, he said, had assured him that the omission of the princess's name would "make the whole easier, particularly in the House of Commons," and accordingly he had consented to her exclusion.[1]

[1] The Duke of Richmond had moved to insert the words: "Her Royal Highness the princess dowager, and others, descended from the late king, now resident in England." When

In the meantime, Halifax had hurried to the House of Peers, where the discussions on the Regency Bill had been revived. As he passed by the Duke of Richmond, he asked him impetuously whether he was satisfied. "By no means," replied the duke; "you have rejected my motion and left my doubt in full force." "Then, my lord," said Halifax, "if you will move it again, I will satisfy you." The duke took him at his word; upon which Halifax, rising from his seat, astounded the House with the announcement that the king had expressed himself in favour of his mother's exclusion. The friends of the princess and of Lord Bute were thunderstruck. The king's better feelings, they were convinced, had been only too successfully tampered with. On the other hand, ministers and their friends were elated beyond measure. The satisfaction depicted on their countenances was a matter of general observation. "The Duke of Bedford," writes Walpole, "almost danced about the house for joy."

During the two following days, the king had time to reflect upon the precipitate step which he had taken. His nature was generous and affectionate, and accordingly the mere surmise that he might have yielded too readily to the arguments of Halifax and Sandwich, and had consequently

Halifax quitted the royal presence, it was with authority from the king to strike out the name of the princess; inserting that of the queen, and leaving the rest of the proposition unaltered.

been guilty of an act of injustice toward his mother, naturally caused him much uneasiness. He was probably in this frame of mind when, on Sunday, the 5th, he was attended by the lord chancellor, who, if Walpole's version be correct, very honestly explained to his sovereign how improperly he had been induced to act. "Intoxicated," writes Walpole, "with presumption, or blind with the thirst of revenge, still it is hard to conceive how they dared to venture on so provoking and desperate an insult." The king was now able to understand in its full extent the cruel deception, as well as the affront, which had been put upon him; and accordingly, when Grenville shortly afterward was admitted to his presence, he found him in a state of great indignation and distress. Grenville himself informs us that when he entered the royal closet the king not only "coloured," but spoke with "great emotion" of the disregard which had been shown to the princess, his mother. How painful, he said, would be the predicament in which he should be placed, should the eligibility of the princess be maintained by the opposition members in the House of Commons, and yet be repudiated by his own ministers! It would be an affront, he said, to his mother, which "he could not bear." His agitation was excessive. It was in vain that Grenville attempted to lay all the blame on his colleagues: the king was too provoked and indignant to vouchsafe him

any reply. When, at the departure of Grenville, Lord Mansfield entered the royal closet, the king opened his whole heart to the great lawyer. He had been "surprised," he said, by Lord Halifax; the treatment which he had met with was too cruel. So affected, indeed, was he, as to shed tears.

As the king lay under no obligation to secrecy, the story of the treatment which he had met with speedily transpired. The result was a reaction of popular feeling in his favour, which greatly encouraged and assisted the efforts which the friends of the princess dowager were making in her behalf. Accordingly, so soon as the Regency Bill had been submitted to the House of Commons, a personal friend of the princess, Morton, Chief Justice of Chester,[1] made a formal motion to insert her name in the document; a proceeding in which he was stanchly supported by Edward Kynaston, an enthusiastic Jacobite, by the younger George Onslow, and by Samuel Martin. By the two latter, Grenville seems to have been assailed with telling effect. "The princess," said Martin, fixing his eye sternly upon the first minister, "has had occasion to see that the professions made to her were not from the heart." Grenville was furious. "Whatever you say to me," he after-

[1] He was M. P. for Abingdon, leader on the Oxford Circuit, and deputy high steward of the university. He died on the 25th of July, 1780.

ward observed to Onslow, "is fair; but there is one man, Martin, whose words I never will forgive." If Grenville, as there is every reason to believe, had anticipated an easy victory over the princess and her friends, he was destined to experience a bitter disappointment. So personally unpopular was he, that many members of the opposition supported Morton's motion with their votes, while others walked out of the House without voting on either side. Possibly, had government put forth all its strength, the result might have been different; but, of course, it was out of the question for ministers to speak and vote against the mother of their sovereign. Accordingly, notwithstanding Halifax's prediction to the king, that the princess would be excluded from the regency by a unanimous vote of the House of Commons, her name was reinstated in the bill by an overwhelming majority. But more humiliating still was the plight of ministers in the House of Lords, on finding themselves reduced to the awkward necessity of calling upon the peers to cancel their former vote, by declaring the eligibility of the princess. During the reading of the bill, as well as during the speech of their mouthpiece, Sandwich, the countenances of the Dukes of Bedford and Halifax were watched by the House with eager curiosity. Neither said a word; Halifax, according to Walpole, "making the most abject and contemptible figure one can conceive."

To what extent Grenville may have been to blame in regard to this transaction, it seems to be difficult to ascertain. According to the explanation given by him to his sovereign in the closet, it was his colleagues alone who were in fault in the matter, if fault there was. Nevertheless, if Grenville did not actually originate the deception which is said to have been practised upon his royal master, we cannot but think that it must have been connived at by him. Not only was he morbidly jealous of any interference with his legitimate authority, but, on this very subject of the regency, we find him somewhat testily calling the king to account for having imparted his views to the lord Chancellor and Halifax, without having previously communicated them to himself. "He observed to his Majesty," he writes, "that whatever difficulty there was in this affair, it would fall heavier upon him, who was to carry it through the House of Commons, than upon any one of his servants whatever." [1] Surely, then, neither Halifax nor Sandwich

[1] According to Halifax's report to Grenville, it was the king himself who "proposed" the exclusion of his mother — certainly a most unlikely circumstance. But if Grenville lays so much stress upon the authority of Halifax, why does not he corroborate it by the evidence of Sandwich, who was also present in the royal closet? Surely, if Sandwich's evidence supported the assertions of Halifax, Grenville would only have been too glad to produce him as a witness. As for Sandwich's and Halifax's personal share in the transaction, improbable as it is that they should have understood the king to originate a proposition which directly and publicly stigmatised his own mother, there is

would have taken the initiative in deceiving their sovereign, unless assured of the tacit, if not the expressed, concurrence of their leader. The inference, therefore, seems to be that, so long as Grenville considered he ran no risk of being compromised himself, he purposely closed his eyes to what was passing around him, leaving the dirty work to be performed by his unscrupulous colleagues.

nevertheless the possibility of their having mistaken his meaning; and they are therefore certainly entitled to the benefit of any doubt that may be thought to exist on the subject.

CHAPTER XIV.

Dislike of the King to the Grenville Ministry — Negotiations with Mr. Pitt Broken off by Lord Temple's Refusal to Coöperate in Forming a Government — Harsh Conditions Imposed on the King by the Grenville Ministry on Their Resuming Office — Unfavourable Effect on the King's Health.

THE imposition which was believed to have been practised upon the king by his ministers — "the notorious lie" which, according to Walpole, Halifax and Sandwich had told him; the reckless way in which they had compromised the dignity of the Crown; the slovenly manner, to say the least of it, in which they had prepared the Regency Bill; the public affront which they had offered to the princess dowager; and, lastly to use the language of Burke, their general "want of concert and want of capacity" — were sufficient to have disgusted and exasperated even the most patient of monarchs. Grenville, moreover, had for some time past been personally unwelcome to the king. His incessant harangues in the royal closet, — no less tiresome than his speeches in the House of Commons, — as well as his unjust suspicions and peevish denunciations of Bute, had repeatedly provoked the king almost beyond endurance.

"When he has wearied me for two hours," said his Majesty, on one occasion, to Lord Bute, "he looks at his watch to see if he may not tire me for an hour more." Of the effect which these harangues occasionally produced on the king, Grenville himself has enabled us to form an adequate conception. "The king," he writes on the 28th of April, "during this conversation seemed exceedingly agitated and disturbed; he changed countenance and flushed so much that the water stood in his eyes from the excessive heat of his face." To the close of the king's life, it is said, he never alluded to Grenville's wearisome declamations without a shudder.

That the king, under all these circumstances, should have been anxious to shake off his present ministers, was only to be expected. Accordingly, when, on the 16th of May, Grenville requested his Majesty's commands relative to some parliamentary business, the king replied to him, with provoking coolness: "There is no hurry, Mr. Grenville; I mean to have Parliament adjourned, not prorogued." Ignorant of the king's meaning, as well as startled at the authoritative tone in which he spoke, Grenville inquired what reasons he was to assign to Parliament for the adjournment. The world, he added, would naturally conclude that his Majesty intended to change his ministers. At these words the king was unable any longer to conceal his agitation. "Mr. Grenville," he ex-

claimed, "I will speak to you about that another time. I promise you I will speak to you. You may depend upon it I will speak to you." Not less stern was the king's language to Grenville on the 19th, on the occasion of the latter questioning him as to the state of the pending ministerial changes. He would shortly speak to him on the subject, replied the king; at the same time commanding him to adjourn Parliament till Monday fortnight. To this Grenville objected that, being virtually out of office, such a step would be a very improper one for him to take. "Then who," inquired the king, "is the proper person to adjourn Parliament?" "Whoever," replied Grenville, "your Majesty destines to be my successor."

Thus was the king bent upon getting rid of his present constitutional advisers; but from what ranks was he to supply their places? Newcastle he had thought of for premier, but Newcastle had recently deeply offended him by his conduct in relation to the regency question. Bute, detested and despised as he was by the nation, was quite out of the question. The king would have greatly preferred Pitt; but the exorbitance of Pitt's demands, the impracticability of his nature, and the recollection of the mortifying result of his last appeal to the Great Commoner, naturally induced the king to hesitate before he again applied for succour to a person at once so wayward and so imperious. Moreover, Pitt was the brother-in-law and

sworn ally of Lord Temple, and Temple, it should be again remembered, was the arch political intriguer of the day, the inveterate foe of the princess dowager and Lord Bute, the fomenter of mob riots, the personal friend and stanch supporter of Wilkes. Lastly, Pitt was tolerably certain to demand the reinstatement of the great Whig lords in the Cabinet as a body, and such a step the king had publicly declared to be incompatible with his "honour."

In the meantime, the king had applied for counsel and assistance to the eldest and most sagacious prince of his house, the Duke of Cumberland. "The king," writes the duke, "the better to put me *au fait* of the true state of his affairs, went through, in a masterly and exact manner, all that had passed since Lord Bute's resigning the treasury. He also went through Mr. Pitt's two audiences of August, 1763; particularising with great justice the characters of several persons who are now upon the stage or who are but just dropped off." The duke had no particular reason for loving his royal nephew, and still less reason for loving Pitt, who, when he had been in power, had made a point of excluding him from any political influence. But whatever treatment the duke might have met with, either from Pitt or from the court, it was not in his noble nature to allow his private resentments to interfere with his duty to his sovereign and to the head of his family, and accord-

ingly, by his advice, the court opened a negotiation with the Great Commoner. The duke was right. Without Pitt's support it was evident that no administration could prove a lasting one. Pitt alone, by his genius, his popularity, and by his influence with the "great families," had it in his power to construct a strong government; to restore the dignity of the kingly office, to arrest the license of the populace, and to render the laws respected and obeyed. The fate of the country, indeed, may almost be said to have been in his hands. "Nothing," writes Edmund Burke to Flood, "but an intractable temper in your friend Pitt can prevent a most admirable and lasting system from being put together, and this crisis will show whether pride or patriotism be predominant in his character; for you may be assured, he has it now in his power to come into the service of his country upon any plan of politics he may choose to dictate, with great and honourable terms to himself, and to every friend he has in the world, and with such a strength of power as will be equal to everything but absolute despotism over the king and kingdom. A few days will show whether he will take this part, or that of continuing on his back at Hayes talking fustian, excluded from all ministerial, and incapable of all parliamentary service."

In the meantime, also, the Duke of Cumberland had been armed with the king's authority to nego-

tiate with, and to make an offer of almost full terms to Pitt. The first interview between these two remarkable men took place on Sunday, the 12th of May, in the sick-chamber of the latter at Hayes. During a tête-à-tête conversation, which lasted for an hour and a half, the duke discussed with the illustrious invalid the grave necessities of the king's affairs; at the same time intimating to him how anxiously his Majesty desired to see him at the head of his councils. "I represented to him," writes the duke, "the manner in which this administration used his Majesty, and that no time was to be lost, as the Parliament must soon be up; that this country looked up to him as the man who had been the author of the great successes during the war; that they almost universally wished him at the head of public affairs." The duke, as he had perhaps anticipated, found the Great Commoner haughty, pompous, and exorbitant in his demands, yet not altogether impracticable. Unhappily, however, Pitt's evil genius, Lord Temple, had acquired an extraordinary influence over his mind, and Temple, who had been invited to the conference, was at this time rapidly posting toward Hayes. Pitt was not only attached to him by the ordinary ties of relationship and friendship, and by having been a sharer with him in past hazards and triumphs, but he also lay under personal obligations to his brother-in-law. Temple's purse had probably been often open to

Pitt; indeed, in 1755, when Pitt was deprived of the lucrative post of paymaster of the forces, we find Temple generously accommodating his brother-in-law with a thousand a year till the advent of more propitious times. "He is my friend," Pitt had recently exclaimed in the House of Commons; "his fidelity is as unshaken as his virtue. We went into office together and we went out of office together, and we will die together."

That Temple, notwithstanding Pitt's expressed intention to recommend him to the king for the post of first lord of the treasury, had hastened to Hayes with the deliberate intention of breaking off the negotiation between his brother-in-law and the court, little doubt can exist. The primary object of his ambition was to cement a political alliance between "the three brothers" as Temple, George Grenville, and Pitt were usually styled; a union which it was intended should become the paramount party in the state. Grenville, it is true, had for some time past been the object of his brother's sarcasm and abuse; but the mortal offence which the former had recently given to Temple's bitterest enemies, the princess dowager and Bute, had not only gone far to restore him to the good graces of his elder brother, but, a few days after the conference at Hayes, effected their entire reconciliation.[1] At all events, from the

[1] The reconciliation between Lord Temple and George Grenville took place on the 22d of May, at Lord Temple's house in

time that Temple made his appearance in Pitt's sick-chamber, the discussions took a turn unfavourable to the duke's earnest wishes and hopes. No sooner did Temple begin to take a part in the deliberations, than fresh difficulties presented themselves, and Pitt's hesitation to close with the offers of the court became more and more evident. "I cannot help saying," writes the duke, "that I think he was more verbose and pompous than Mr. Pitt." Eventually the influence, if not the arguments, of Temple prevailed. No one, however, could be more fully aware than Pitt how urgently his country needed his services, and, accordingly, it was not without a sigh, perhaps not without a feeling of self-reproach, that he rejected the liberal offers of his sovereign. At the moment of his parting with Temple, he mournfully addressed him in the words of Virgil:

> "Extinxti me, teque, soror, populumque, patresque
> Sidonios, urbemque tuam."
>
> — *Æneid*, lib. iv. ver. 682.

> "You, by this fatal stroke, and I, and all
> Your senate, people, and your country, fall."
>
> — *Pitt's Translation.*

"This is neither administration, nor government," writes Walpole to Lord Hertford. "The

Pall Mall. In the course of the following month we find Grenville happily domesticated at Stow; nor was the renewed good understanding between the two brothers ever afterward interrupted.

king is out of town; and this is the crisis in which Mr. Pitt, who could stop every evil, chooses to be more unreasonable than ever."

It was with feelings of the deepest disappointment that the Duke of Cumberland returned to the king at Buckingham House, bringing with him, to use his own expression, "nothing but compliments and doubts in answer to his Majesty's gracious offers." Personal dislike of Grenville seems to have whetted his zeal in the cause of his royal nephew. "There is no animal on the face of the earth," writes Mr. Stuart Mackenzie, "that the duke has a more thorough contempt for, or a greater aversion to, than Grenville." The king, too, was greatly distressed at the unsuccessful result of his uncle's mission. Again he had committed the fatal error of exasperating one set of ministers, before he had secured the services of their successors; again he had laid bare the extreme weakness of his position; and again he was reduced to the humiliating alternative of inviting his former tyrants to return to power, with the additional mortification of knowing that their demands, as well as their insolence, would rise with the occasion. That their treatment of him had already been sufficiently dictatorial and insulting there is ample evidence to prove. "The king's ministers," as the Earl of Albemarle told Pitt, on the authority of the Duke of Cumberland, "had taken such possession of the closet that they

scarcely acted with decency to their master." The Duke of Cumberland himself speaks feelingly of "the *déboires* and indignities with which these gentlemen in power insulted his Majesty each day, instead of applying themselves to the good of the public in general, or to restoring to his Majesty the affections of his people." Lastly, Stuart Mackenzie writes to Sir Andrew Mitchell: "His Majesty, offended in the highest degree with the insolence offered him by his present ministers, would have put any mortal in their place that could have carried on business." The king, indeed, however unwisely he may have acted, was much to be pitied. The wearisome lectures of Grenville, the duplicity of Halifax, the insulting tirades of Bedford against Bute, were again to be encountered and endured by him. Again his word was to be called in question; again his friends were to be ostracised, his wishes thwarted, and his motives either misinterpreted or misunderstood. Moreover, the reconciliation between Lord Temple and George Grenville threatened him with fresh annoyance; a fact of which he was so well aware that, when informed by the latter of what had taken place, he was unable to conceal his vexation. "I do not trouble myself," he said, "about the friendships of others, and wish nobody would trouble themselves about mine." [1]

[1] Lord Temple had assured the Duke of Cumberland that his reconciliation with his brother was only a "private" one, and

In the meantime, while the negotiations with Pitt had been still pending, the conduct of the king, as well as of those who were supposed to be aiding and abetting him in his object of changing the government, had been highly resented by ministers and their friends. For instance, hitherto the houses of Percy and Russell had associated on the most affectionate terms; yet no sooner was it rumoured that Lord Northumberland was the person employed in conveying the necessary communications between the king and the Duke of Cumberland, and further that, late in the evening of the 18th, his Majesty had admitted him with his own hand by a private entrance into his gardens at Richmond, than the earl found himself exposed to the rudest possible treatment, of which what follows may be taken as an example. The Duke and Duchess of Bedford happened to be in affliction, and accordingly, for the amiable purpose of paying them a visit of condolence, Lord Northumberland carried his countess to Bedford House, where they had a right to expect, if not a cordial, at least a civil reception. George Grenville, however, who had been previously announced, appears to have communicated to the company the apocryphal incident of the earl's mysterious admission into Richmond Gardens, and accordingly, when Lord Northumberland made his appearance, not

did not "extend to political connection." "But that, my lord," said the duke, drily, "will, I suppose, soon follow."

only was he suffered to remain standing, not only was not a syllable addressed to him, but the Duke of Bedford even went so far as to turn on his heel and contemptuously quit the apartment. "Words," writes Walpole, who was present, "cannot describe the disdainful manner in which they were received." The duchess and her friends even condescended to the vulgarity of talking at their guests. "The language which passed," writes Grenville, who still lingered in the apartment, "could not be very pleasing." According to Walpole, the earl "was kept standing an hour, exposed to all their raillery." "Faith!" whispered Lord Waldegrave to one of the company, "this is too much."

By the morning of Tuesday, the 21st, it seems to have been pretty generally understood that the negotiation with Pitt had miscarried; and accordingly, at eight o'clock on the evening of that day, ministers held a meeting at Bedford House, for the express purpose of fixing the conditions which it would be expedient to impose upon their royal master, in the probable event of his soliciting them to retain their places. "The king," writes Walpole to Lord Hertford, "is reduced to the mortification — and it is extreme — of taking his old ministers again. They are insolent enough, you may believe. Grenville has treated his master in the most impertinent manner, and they are now actually discussing the terms that they mean to impose on their captive. You have more than

once," continues Walpole, "seen your old master[1] reduced to surrender up his closet to a cabal; but never with such circumstances of insult, indignity, and humiliation!"

It was on the afternoon of this day that, previously to the meeting at Bedford House, the king again received Grenville in the royal closet. The haughty minister, as he himself informs us, found his sovereign "in great disorder and agitation." Concealment being no longer necessary on the part of the king, he freely admitted the utter failure of his recent overtures to the opposition. As far as Grenville was personally concerned, the king's language to him was sufficiently kind and conciliatory. He knew, he told him, that he had "served him faithfully, ably, and with attachment." But very different was the language in which he spoke of the other members of the administration. "In other parts of his government," said the young king, "there had been slackness, inability, precipitation, and neglect," a fact, he added, which no one knew better than Grenville himself. He was then constrained to put the humiliating question to Grenville, whether he was again "willing to serve him." Grenville affected to hesitate. Bute, he intimated, was evidently the real minister behind the scenes; all the world, he said, perceived that he was the author of the late "unhappy step." This the king denied, though, in

[1] George the Second.

the present state of his minister's feelings, with little chance of his word being credited. The world, continued Grenville, would with difficulty be induced to believe otherwise. The tedious minister then began to dilate upon his own services and merits. He had "sacrificed hitherto," he said, "every consideration of interest, pleasure, leisure, and happiness, nay, of health, too, to his willingness and desire to serve his Majesty." Under circumstances, he said, of great difficulty, he had conducted the government in a manner far surpassing his most sanguine expectations; he had succeeded in "managing the chancellor's mind;" and, though the Duke of Bedford was his enemy, he had "united himself with his Grace for his Majesty's service." Was it not, then, cruel and mortifying to him, he asked, to find himself less acceptable to his Majesty than two years previously had been the case? Furthermore, he doubted whether the king, by his recent course of action, had not put it out of the power of his ministers to resume office. At all events, he said, he could return no answer to his Majesty till he had consulted with his colleagues. The king, distressed and anxious beyond all measure, pressed him for a "categorical answer," but to no purpose. Accordingly, he was left with no other alternative but to urge his minister to employ "all haste" in communicating with his colleagues; enjoining him to return to him at an early hour, which he named,

in order that he might be relieved as soon as possible from his present painful state of suspense.

The great impatience with which the king awaited the return of his minister to Buckingham House my be gleaned from the following note, which was placed in the hands of Grenville while still seated in council with his colleagues.

The King to Mr. Grenville.

"15 min. past 9, P. M.

"MR. GRENVILLE: — I am surprised that you are not yet come, when you know it was my orders to be attended this evening. I expect you therefore to come the moment you receive this."

Grenville, of course, had no choice but to hasten to his sovereign, who, with "great impatience," inquired the result of the conference. The arrival of the king's note, replied Grenville, had abruptly broken up the meeting, before ministers had been afforded sufficient time to come to a decision on the momentous question which his Majesty had submitted for their consideration. The king, under these circumstances, had again no alternative but to prescribe expedition to his minister, who, accordingly, at an early hour on the following morning, again met his colleagues in council. At twelve o'clock he waited on the king to apprise him of the result. Ministers, he said, had four requisitions to make. First, that they should be

empowered to announce the total exclusion, for the future, of Lord Bute from all interference whatever in public affairs; secondly, the dismissal of Lord Bute's brother, Mr. James Stuart Mackenzie, from his office of lord privy seal in Scotland; thirdly, the removal of Lord Holland from the post of paymaster of the forces; and fourthly, the appointment of the Marquis of Granby to be commander-in-chief of the army. There was also a further requisition relative to the affairs of Ireland. In answer to the king's dry inquiry whether ministers had been unanimous in adopting these resolutions, Grenville replied in the affirmative. "And your opinions, Mr. Grenville," inquired the king, "coincide with those of your colleagues?" "Had it been otherwise, Sir," was the answer, "I should not have been the bearer of them." "And they are absolutely *sine quâ non?*" asked the king. "Unless they had been considered indispensable," continued Grenville, "ministers would not have troubled his Majesty by submitting them to his judgment." "I will consider of them," said the king, "and give you my answer in the evening." Grenville bowed and retired.

Accordingly, at eleven o'clock the same night, the king sent for Grenville. With regard, he said, to the first of the demands made upon him, he was ready to "promise and declare" that neither directly nor indirectly, neither publicly nor privately, should Bute either influence or advise

him in affairs of state. To the dismissal of Lord Holland he also gave his consent. The appointment of Lord Granby to the head of the army would probably have been strongly opposed by the king, but, in this case, the difficulty was happily removed by Lord Granby waiving his claims during the lifetime of the Duke of Cumberland, for whom the king was bound in honour to reserve the appointment. The last and great difficulty lay in the pertinacious demand of ministers for the removal of Mr. Stuart Mackenzie from office.[1] With the exception of his relationship to Lord Bute, no charge could be brought against this faithful and accomplished servant of the Crown. In former days, in order to accommodate the government, Mr. Mackenzie had consented to exchange a lucrative appointment for that which it was now proposed to take from him; the king, at the same time, volunteering a promise that during the remainder of his reign, Mr. Mackenzie should be secure in the tenure of his new

[1] The Hon. James Archibald Stuart, only brother of Lord Bute, had assumed the name of Mackenzie on succeeding to the estate of his great-grandfather, Sir George Mackenzie of Rosehaugh. He had formerly been minister at the court of Sardinia, from 1759 to 1762, on which occasion, he had as his secretary the well-known M. Dutens, who, in his "Memoirs of a Traveller now in Retirement," more than once speaks in terms of high commendation of his patron and friend. Mr. Mackenzie married Lady Betty Campbell, daughter of John, second Duke of Argyle, by whom he had no issue, and died April 6, 1800, at the age of eighty-two.

office. Yet this deliberate covenant ministers now cruelly called upon their sovereign to break.

The effect which this last-named demand produced upon the mind of the king was inexpressibly distressing. In vain, however, Grenville was a witness of his sovereign's affliction. In vain his Majesty, to use Grenville's own words, "fell into great agitation," and "strove in every manner possible" to save his honour and his servant. In vain he pointed out to Grenville that he should be disgraced if he yielded. The cold man of business obstinately and obdurately held out. "I informed him," Grenville himself writes, "that Mr. Mackenzie's absolute removal was considered as too essential an object to be waived; a circumstance which evidently appeared to pain and distress him. He then asked me if I concurred with those gentlemen in thinking the whole indispensably necessary; to which I answered he should do me the justice to suppose I never would offer to him any proposition of which I did not approve. Upon this, he told me, but with the greatest seeming reluctance, that he would give way to it. Observing that he continued to show marks of the greatest uneasiness, I most humbly entreated him to permit me to kiss his hand and leave his service, as I could not bear to be the channel of urging anything which so evidently distressed him. He answered: 'I have said I will do it: can you expect more?' My entreaties to retire, and these

expressions in return, were more than once repeated." "I will not," exclaimed the king, "throw my kingdom into confusion. You force me to break my word, and must be responsible for the consequences." And again the king added: "Mr. Grenville, I have desired you to stay in my service; I see I must yield. I do it for the good of my people." At so late an hour as four o'clock, on the morning of the 23d, we find Grenville writing to the lord chancellor that he has "only just returned from the Queen's House."

Some satisfaction there is in being able to state that the king's conduct at this trying juncture was not only forgiven, but was highly approved of, by the amiable and right-minded gentleman who was made the scapegoat on the occasion. When, on the evening of the 23d, the king received Mr. Mackenzie in his closet, "a very affecting scene," according to Sir Gilbert Elliot, "passed between them." "His Majesty," writes Mr. Mackenzie to Sir Andrew Mitchell, "sent for me to his closet, where I was a very considerable time with him, and if it were possible to love my excellent prince now, better than I ever did before, I should certainly do it; for I have every reason that can induce a generous or a grateful mind to feel his goodness to me. But such was his Majesty's situation at that time, that had he absolutely rejected my dismission, he would have put me in the most disagreeable situation in the

world, and, what was of much higher consequence, he would have greatly distressed his affairs." The king, however, though thus handsomely released from his engagement, appears to have found much difficulty in forgiving either his ministers or himself. For some days he lived in almost entire seclusion. A drawing-room, which was to have been held, was postponed. On the following Sunday it was remarked that he abstained from receiving the holy sacrament. The excitement, indeed, of the last three weeks threatened a return of the distressing malady by which he had so recently been prostrated. When, on the 24th, Grenville entered the royal closet, he found him "very gloomy and with an air of great dissatisfaction." Before night he found it necessary to consult the royal physicians. "They waited," writes Grenville, "a considerable time while the Dukes of York and Gloucester were with the king. At last the king opened the door himself, and called them in. He gave Sir William Duncan his hand to feel his pulse, which was quick; but bid him not mind it, because he had been hurried for some days past, but that he had eaten very little, and had no fever. He inquired earnestly of Sir Clifton Wintringham how the Duke of Cumberland fared after all his fatigue, and if he stood it well, and that for his part he never had slept above two hours for several days past."

CHAPTER XV.

The King's Coolness to His Ministers — Want of Unanimity in the Government — The Spitalfields Weavers Have an Interview with the King — The "Weavers' Riots" — Bedford House Attacked — The King's Seasonable Promptitude — The King Again Unsuccessfnlly Negotiates with Mr. Pitt — Earl Temple's Refusal to Take Office — Perplexities of the King — Abruptness of the Dismissal of Grenville and the Duke of Bedford — Formation of the Rockingham Administration.

THE indifferent grace with which the king received back his old ministers must have been apparent even to the youngest courtier. He not only, both in his personal and official communications with them, showed himself distant and uncompliant, but even at his levees made no scruple of encountering them with cold looks, while their political opponents were received by him with smiles and gracious words. Such conduct may have been impolitic, and even unconstitutional, but, at the same time, the great provocation which the king had experienced from his ministers must be taken into full account. Not only had he reason to reproach them with their insolent conduct toward him in the closet, — with the cruel insult which they had offered to his mother, and the no

less cruel manner in which they had compelled him to break his word, — but he had other and more popular grounds for complaint. Anxious as he was to discharge, to the best of his ability, his obligations to his people, and, with this object in view, constantly and diligently employing himself in mastering a knowledge of the affairs of state and of the duties and details of the different public offices, the young king had a right to expect from his ministers something like a corresponding amount of zeal and assiduity. On the contrary, to repeat his own words, he met for the most part with nothing but "slackness, inability, precipitation, and neglect." At one time we find him complaining of the "hurry and precipitancy" with which Halifax discharged his public duties; at another time lamenting the negligence of the Duke of Bedford in attending Cabinet councils; on a third occasion he is "ever complaining of Lord Halifax and Lord Sandwich;" and again, some time afterward, we find him preferring complaints to the Duke of Cumberland that neither of these two lords "do any business," and that each is "extremely dilatory in public affairs." For Sandwich, on account of his personal profligacy, the king seems to have entertained an especial aversion. "The king," writes Grenville, "speaks daily with more and more averseness to Lord Sandwich, and appears to have a settled dislike to his character."

Another complaint which the king preferred against his ministers was a want of that unanimity and concert among themselves, in the absence of which no administration could possibly establish a character for dignity and vigour. They had scarcely been installed in office, before they had begun to squabble respecting the distribution of patronage. The Duke of Bedford and Grenville, observed the king, agreed on no other point but that of laying down the law to him.[1] In November, 1763, Grenville is angry with Sandwich for attempting to "steal" the high stewardship of Cambridge, and to return a member to Parliament for that county. In January, 1764, Halifax is "heated and eager" with Grenville on the subject of colonial appointments and salaries. In March following we find the Duke of Bedford writing an "angry letter" to Grenville for conferring a Red Ribbon on Lord Clive instead of on Colonel Draper. In July, 1764, ministers are disagreed among themselves relative to the time to be allowed to France for discharging the debt due by her to Great Britain for the maintenance of French prisoners during the war. During the same month Grenville is dissatisfied with Halifax and Sandwich on account of the undecided

[1] The duke, in August, 1763, had certainly recommended the king to dismiss Grenville from the premiership and send for Pitt, a fact which Grenville had not forgotten nor probably forgiven.

language held by them to the French ministers. He complains, also, that Halifax's general conduct and behaviour to him are very unsatisfactory. In September Grenville receives "a rather angry letter" from Halifax for refusing to consent to the recall of Lord Hertford from being ambassador at Paris. During the same month the lord chancellor and the Duke of Bedford complain to the king of Halifax's "deadness in council." In December Grenville is forced to admit to the king that Halifax and Sandwich are in the habit of deliberately thwarting him in business relating to the treasury. In May, 1765, the Duke of Bedford is "greatly heated and incensed" against the lord chancellor for his conduct during the Regency Bill. A few days afterward, at a dinner at Lord Sandwich's, we find Grenville and Halifax mutually charging each other with unkindness. Grenville, about the same time, acknowledges to the king that there had been "uneasiness among his servants." Lastly, the only occasion on which we find the First Lord of the Admiralty, Lord Egmont, opening his lips at the council-table, is to use warm words to Halifax.

In the charges of negligence and incapacity, which the king brought against his other ministers, Grenville was not included. Unbending and domineering as the well-meaning statesman was in his intercourse with his sovereign, — tiresome as were his lectures, and cold and suspicious as was

his nature — the king had never failed to do justice to his laborious industry, his personal integrity, and his sincere zeal for the public service. It was not till Grenville had completely identified himself with his colleagues, — not till he had dictated to his sovereign those cruel and insolent terms on which he had consented to retain office, — that the king seems to have thought of sacrificing him with the rest of his ministers. The king, moreover, not only did full justice to Grenville's administrative abilities, but, up to a certain period of their intercourse, seems, as has been already stated, to have felt as much personal regard for him as he could entertain for a man so phlegmatic and so determined to play the despot. Certainly, during the whole existence of Grenville's ill-assorted administration, the king and his first minister seem to have been the only individuals between whom there prevailed any steady concert and coöperation. Grenville's own diary, moreover, is replete with instances of kindness to him on the part of the king, and of evidences of his sovereign's fullest confidence in his ungenial minister. From the date, however, at which Grenville compelled his master to break his royal word, these kindly traits no longer occur in the diary. On the contrary, the king's manner toward his minister in the closet is described as being merely "easy and civil."

Unfortunately, it was not in the suspicious

nature of the offended minister to attribute his sovereign's civility to any other but an unworthy motive. He has "no reason," he writes, "to think that it proceeds from anything but disguise." This unmistakable charge of duplicity on the part of Grenville, we cannot but consider as being most unfair. The king, indeed, so far from playing a part, never for a moment appears to have concealed the dislike which he had latterly begun to entertain for Grenville as well as for his colleagues. According to Walpole, who was a close and well-informed observer of passing events, his Majesty, from the day that Parliament had been prorogued, had taken "all opportunities of frowning on his tyrants and thwarting their desires." Entries, in fact, in Grenville's own diary, corroborate the truth of this statement. For instance, Grenville happening to allude to the king's "goodness" in having conferred upon Lord Lorn the post of privy seal in Scotland, lately held by Mr. Stuart Mackenzie, his Majesty sarcastically replied, "It is your goodness, Mr. Grenville, not mine." Similarly unconciliating was his reply to Grenville when the latter proposed to him to confer, either upon Lord Waldegrave or upon Lord Suffolk, the vacant post of master of the horse to the queen. It was no office of state, said the king. It was reasonable that her Majesty should like to please herself, and accordingly she had that morning nominated the Duke of

Ancaster for the appointment. Again, when, at Grenville's solicitation, the king consented to the appointment of Lord Robert Manners to a vacant colonelcy of dragoons, he took the opportunity of marking his dislike to Grenville, by sending for Lord Granby and letting him know that his uncle, Lord Robert, "owed the grace singly to him," and not to the influence of his minister. And yet it is in the face of these facts that Grenville coolly charges the king with dissimulation! George the Third may not have been unversed in the arts of kingcraft; yet, on the present occasion, he seems to have been much too angry with Grenville to render it likely that the "civility" with which he treated him was intended to imply more than the ordinary courtesy with which one gentleman usually behaves toward another. "The king," writes Lord Chesterfield, in allusion to Grenville and his colleagues, "shows them all the public dislike possible, and at his levee hardly speaks to any of them, but speaks by the hour to anybody else."

Another reason given by the king for being dissatisfied with his ministers lay in the formidable insurrectionary tumults, known as the "Weavers' Riots," which, in the month of May, frightened the metropolis from its propriety. In the opinion of the king, it was to the unpopularity of his servants that the disturbances were mainly attributable, and owing to their timidity that they were

so long in being suppressed. For some time past, the Spitalfields weavers, unable to compete with foreign manufacturers, had been in a condition of unprecedented distress. Great numbers had been thrown out of employment, and many were almost without food. In order to remedy the evil, a bill had been carried through the House of Commons, which, while it promised to improve the condition of the English weavers, threatened, on the other hand, the very serious consequence of excluding foreign silks altogether from the British market. This great objection the Duke of Bedford had the sagacity to discover; and accordingly, mainly by his arguments and efforts, the bill, to the bitter disappointment of the weavers, was thrown out of the House of Lords.

To appeal personally to their sovereign for redress was now the object of the sufferers, and consequently, on the day after the bill had been rejected by the Lords, about four thousand "pale and emaciated" creatures presented themselves before the king's lodge at Richmond, where their sudden appearance and formidable numbers occasioned no light alarm to the queen, who happened at the time to be walking in the paddocks. Here they learned that the king had gone to Wimbledon to review some troops, and accordingly thither they proceeded, where they were kindly and graciously listened to by their sovereign, and, on his dismissing them, returned in a very orderly

manner, and apparently much gratified, to London.[1]

But the following day, whatever may have been the cause, the late peaceful aspect of affairs became entirely changed. In the course of the afternoon a vast concourse of unruly persons, carrying red and black flags, assembled in the neighbourhood of the Houses of Parliament. The members of the House of Commons, as from time to time they made their appearance in Palace Yard, were received with cheers, while the Lords were greeted with hisses and groans. The carriages of many of the peers were stopped, and among them that of the lord chancellor, of whom the mob menacingly inquired whether he had not been an opponent of the recent bill. The stout and unhesitating manner in which he replied in the affirmative induced his interrogators to alter their tone, and to content themselves with expressing a hope that he would do them justice. "Always," he answered, "and everywhere; and whoever does so need fear nothing." The king, though followed to the House of Lords by a vast number of half-starved artisans, was treated with marked deference and respect. The

[1] Colonel Dalrymple, who saw the poor fellows on their march to Richmond, describes them, in a letter to the Duke of Bedford, as "rather like a parcel of recruits going to their regiments than a populace following the dictates of rage and passion."

Duke of Bedford, as might have been anticipated, was the principal object of the people's rage. Not only was he hooted and pelted, but one large stone — weighing, as Grenville informs us, five or six pounds — cut him in the hand with which he endeavoured to parry it, and then bruised his temple. On his return to his house in Bloomsbury Square, finding himself still followed by a large body of the rioters, he boldly addressed them from the window of his chariot; at the same time inviting any two of their leaders to accompany him into the house, and there discuss with him their grievances. The invitation was accepted. Two of the rioters followed the duke into his mansion, and, after having conferred with him for some time, returned to their friends, evidently gratified with his Grace's courtesy, if not convinced by his arguments.

Unluckily, the insults offered to the peers proved but the prelude to worse disorders. For three days London may almost be said to have been in the hands of the mob. During this period the members of the legislature were again insulted on their way to Westminster; large bodies of men, who had previously been assembled by beat of drum, paraded the streets with their colours flying; on the afternoon of the 16th the standard of the mob was to be seen floating side by side with the royal standard at the entrance to the House of Lords; the windows of per-

sons suspected to be venders of French silks were demolished, and even armourers' shops were broken into, and the arms carried away. But it was on the Duke of Bedford and his property that the mob was principally bent on venting its fury. During the three days referred to, Bedford House was not only garrisoned with soldiers and subjected to a state of siege, but, at one time, so bold was the attitude of the rioters, that while the military were engaged in repelling an attack on the front of the mansion, another detachment of the rabble very nearly succeeded in effecting an entrance at its rear. Even so late as Sunday, the 19th, when order had, comparatively speaking, been restored, and when Bedford House was thronged with the great and the fashionable, who came to condole with the duke and duchess, we find a large number of idlers and ill-disposed persons still surrounding the gates, and occasionally resorting to acts of outrage. The glass of Lady Grosvenor's coach, for instance, was broken, and the windows of Lady Cork's chair completely demolished. "I hope," writes the Duke of Bedford to the Duke of Marlborough, "that all is now partly subsided, though I am yet obliged to keep garrison here with an hundred infantry and thirty-six cavalry; and, it being Sunday night, the concourse of people is still very great, though not very dangerous; it consisting chiefly of such as mere curiosity has

brought here." [1] Walpole, who was one of those who had hastened to wait upon the duke and duchess, has left us a graphic sketch of his visit. "I found," he says, "the square crowded, but chiefly with persons led by curiosity. As my chariot had no coronets, I was received with huzzas; but when the horses turned to enter the court, dirt and stones were thrown at it. When the gates opened, I was surprised with the most martial appearance. The Horse Guards were drawn up in the court, and many officers and gentlemen were walking about, as on the platform of a regular citadel. The whole house was open, and knots of the same kind were in every room." In a letter to the Earl of Hertford, Walpole gives a nearly similar account of his visit. "There is," he adds, "such a general spirit of mutiny and dissatisfaction in the lower people, that I think we are in danger of a rebellion in the heart of the capital in a week." Walpole's fears of a rebellion fortunately were unfounded. A large public subscription, which was raised for the suffering artisans, — added to a guarantee on the part of the master-weavers to revoke the orders which they had given for foreign silks, — went far to arrest the progress of the tumults.

But it was to the promptitude and decision of

[1] "Let them be a mob, or any other demonstration," writes Colonel Dalrymple to the duke, "they are dangerous weapons when directed against any individual."

the king that society was mainly indebted for the restoration of order and the prevention of bloodshed. For instance, at one time we find him giving directions for a regiment at Chatham to advance nearer to London, and at another time writing to the Duke of Cumberland to be ready at a moment's notice to take command of the troops as captain-general. "I have sent this," he writes to his uncle, "to one who has my orders not to deliver it to any one but yourself, and to bring an immediate answer, and also your opinion when and how soon we can meet; for if any disturbance arises in the night, I should think the hour proposed for to-morrow too late." On the following day we find the king at St. James's, seemingly, in Grenville's language, "in great disorder and agitation." He was hurt, he told his minister, that people should think he had kept out of the way from fear. He was ready "to put himself at the head of his army, or do anything to save his country."

That these, and other popular tumults which disgraced the earlier period of the reign of George the Third were fomented by men of high rank and powerful political influence, little doubt seems to exist. "What," was the significant observation of that veteran trafficker in agitation, Lord Holland, in allusion to the weavers' riots, "What might not an artful man do with these mobs!" The present riots, in the opinion of Walpole, had been "blown

up" by the friends of Wilkes; while the Duchess of Bedford, on the contrary, insisted "with warmth and acrimony" to Walpole, that the real culprit was Bute. So also thought the Duke of Bedford; who even went so far as to prefer a charge against that nobleman to the king to this effect — a charge as unjust as it was preposterous. A mob, as Walpole shrewdly observes, was a kind of edged tool which so detested a public character as Bute was not very likely to summon to his assistance. The duke, however, as we learn from the high authority of his colleague, Grenville, persisted in pressing his convictions upon his incredulous sovereign "with terms of reproach to Lord Bute for his perfidy."

We have now brought to its close our summary of the causes of the king's obvious unhappiness, as well as his reasons for endeavouring to get rid of an administration that seems to have been scarcely less unpopular with his subjects, than it was obnoxious to himself. We have seen also how signal had been his discomfiture; how complete had been the triumph of his tyrants; and how painful consequently had been his mortification. "The king," writes Walpole "insulted and prisoner, his mother stigmatised, his favourite persecuted — it is again a scene of Bohuns, Montforts, and Plantagenets." "The king," swore Bedford's creature, Rigby, "shall not be allowed to appoint one of his own footmen." Means of escape, indeed,

the king had at hand, but those means, in his opinion, were fraught with humiliation if not with disgrace. It will be remembered how great had been his exultation when he emancipated himself from the thraldom of the great Whig magnates; how loud had been the vaunt of the courtiers that their royal master was now a king indeed; how boastfully they had proclaimed that the Crown would never again be enslaved by an insolent cabal. Yet so helpless now was the king's condition, and so deep his distress, as to impel him to turn his thoughts once more toward the powerful and arrogant party which he had found in office at the time of his accession. It will be remembered how harsh and impolitic had been the king's treatment of the Duke of Devonshire; how summary had been his Grace's dismissal from the lord-chamberlainship, and the erasure of his name from the books of the Council office. Had the duke been still living, the advice and influence of so upright and high-minded a nobleman might have proved of the utmost service to the king, in this his hour of necessity. But the tomb had closed over the princely Devonshire in the prime of his days: his power and his titles had been transmitted to his son, a youth in his seventeenth year. To conciliate the powerful house of Cavendish was of course of considerable importance to the court. Not only had the present duke three uncles in the House of Commons, but two of them were persons

of talent and political weight. The king, therefore, was induced to express his regret for what had passed, and to invite the noble boy to St. James's. Thither accordingly he went, accompanied by his uncles; doubtless to be received by the king with marked consideration and kindness.

Such a procedure as this, combined with the king's unconcealed dislike for his present ministers could scarcely fail to excite their high displeasure, and consequently it was determined to bring him a second time to account. By this time the parliamentary session was at an end; the Duke of Bedford was in a hurry to set off for Woburn; Grenville had fixed upon the 15th as the day of his departure for Wotton; wherefore little time was to be lost in coming to an understanding with their royal master. The person deputed by the Cabinet to be their spokesman on the occasion was the Duke of Bedford, who, having introduced himself into the royal closet, at once commenced one of those long and dictatorial lectures which were the king's especial abhorrence. He was going into the country for a fortnight, he told the king, perhaps for three weeks, perhaps for a month, and if, upon his return, he and his colleagues were not received "with greater expressions of favour and confidence," they were resolved to resign their offices. The king replied in language equally haughty. As for confidence, he said, he had extended to them as much as was

requisite for the despatch of public business; and "as to favour, they had not taken the way to merit it." If Junius — who wrote under the impression that the duke's remonstrance was a written one — is to be credited, the duke reproached the king "in plain terms, with his duplicity, baseness, falsehood, treachery, and hypocrisy; repeatedly gave him the lie, and left him in convulsions." Walpole's account differs in no material degree from that of Junius. "The king had the greatest difficulty to command himself enough to hear it read to the end. It tended to give him a month to consider whether he would take a new ministry or retain the old. In the latter case he was told he must smile upon his ministers, and frown on their adversaries, whom he was reproached, in no light terms, with having countenanced, contrary to his promise. Invectives against the princess were not spared, nor threats of bringing Lord Bute to the block. The king made no answer, but made a bow as a signal for them to retire." [1] If, said the king when the duke

[1] Walpole, in using the word "them," wrote under the double and erroneous impression that Grenville, Sandwich, and Halifax accompanied the Duke of Bedford into the royal closet, and further that the remonstrance to which the king was compelled to listen was not a verbal but a written one. Lord Macaulay also writes: "Grenville and Bedford demanded an audience of him, and read him a remonstrance of many pages, which they had drawn up with great care." Notwithstanding, however, these high authorities, the Duke of Bedford certainly seems to have

had gone, he had not broken out into a most profuse perspiration, his indignation would have suffocated him.

The justice of the charges thus brought against the Duke of Bedford has occasionally been disputed. That, on the one hand, the account of Junius is greatly exaggerated, and that of Walpole overcoloured, there seems to be little question. But, on the other hand, that the Duke of Bedford made use of language to his sovereign which would have been regarded as in the highest degree offensive had it been applied by one private gentleman to another, seems to be equally certain. Take, for instance, the charges of perfidy and falsehood which we find him bringing against his sovereign, in regard to the asserted continuance of the king's political connection with Lord Bute. Only three weeks, it must be remembered, had passed, since the king had entered into a solemn compact with his ministers neither directly nor indirectly to consult with his early friend and ad-

been the only person closeted with the king; indeed, Grenville, in his diary, expressly intimates that when he "went in" to the king it was after the duke had quitted the royal presence. Walpole, also, in a letter written by him at the time, seems to contradict the statement made by him in his "Memoirs of George III." viz.— "that Grenville, Sandwich, and Halifax accompanied" the duke. "This day fortnight," he writes, "the Duke of Bedford, in the name of himself and his three colleagues, prescribed to his Majesty," etc. It may be further mentioned that there is no trace among the archives at Woburn of any such document as is referred to severally by Walpole and Lord Macaulay.

viser, yet, without the slightest apparent reason, we now find the Duke of Bedford cruelly and audaciously inquiring of his royal master whether — to use the duke's own words — "this promise had been kept?" It was in vain that the king assured him that his royal word had been faithfully adhered to, — that Bute had been in no way consulted, — and that, so far from that nobleman having done the duke any ill offices, he had on the contrary "always spoken of him with great regard." "I proceeded," writes the duke to the Duke of Marlborough, "to beseech him to permit his authority and his favour and countenance to go together; and, if the last cannot be given to his present ministers, to transfer to others that authority which must be useless in their hands, unless strengthened by the former." Bute, on this occasion, appears to have been contemptuously spoken of by the duke as "this favourite," and his continued "pernicious advice," according to Grenville's account, very offensively commented upon. The only wonder is, that the king, instead of listening "civilly and temperately" to the duke, — which Grenville, on his Grace's authority, informs us was the case, — should not have ordered the page in attendance to turn him out of the closet. George the Second, according to Lord Macaulay, would have been provoked to kick him out of the room. Neither was this the first occasion on which Bedford had taxed his sovereign with telling a

falsehood. "I took the liberty," writes his Grace, on the 19th of May, "to remind the king upon what conditions, proposed by himself, — namely the excluding Lord Bute from his presence and any participation in public affairs, — I was called by him into his service, and how very unfaithfully these conditions had been kept with me."

As had happened on a late occasion, the king in his distress turned all his thoughts toward Pitt. Accordingly, on Monday, the 17th of June, the Duke of Grafton, by the king's orders, set off for Hayes to negotiate with the Great Commoner, and to invite him to court in the event of his finding him willing to undertake the formation of a new ministry. Pitt, as usual, hesitated and coquetted, but subsequently expressed his readiness to wait upon his sovereign, merely preferring a humble request that, in consideration of his lameness, his Majesty would be graciously pleased to receive him in an apartment on the basement floor of the palace.

The appointed interview between the king and Pitt took place on the 19th of June, at Buckingham House, and lasted for three hours and a quarter. The principal conditions required by Pitt were the appointments of Lord Temple to be first lord of the treasury, and of the Duke of Grafton and himself to be secretaries of state. These and other demands were cheerfully acceded to by the king, and thus, when Pitt made his

parting bow to his sovereign, appearances wore every promise of success.

In the meantime, ministers, confiding in their strength in the House of Commons, and satisfied that the king was secure in their meshes, had retired for a time from the scene of their labours. The Duke of Bedford was at Woburn; Grenville was a guest of his brother, Lord Temple, at Stow; Halifax was also in the country. Sandwich, however, was still in London, when the startling intelligence was communicated to him that the king and Pitt had just been closeted together. "The king," he writes to Grenville, "did not come to St. James's till near two o'clock. Upon inquiry I found the occasion of this unusual delay was that Mr. Pitt was actually at that time at the Queen's House, where he had been for near two hours." Sandwich's letter contains a pressing exhortation to Grenville to hasten back to London, but the latter had his reasons for remaining in the country. "When I took leave of the king," he replies to Sandwich, "I asked his permission to stay in the country till Tuesday next, which he granted to me. My return to town before that time, uncalled for, will have the appearance of a desire to embarrass the arrangement which he is now endeavouring to form, and which I need not tell you will come on, or go off, just the same, whether I am there or not; as the king would not, in the present situation, communicate it to me, and,

without that, I certainly should not trouble him on the subject." The result of a second interview between the king and Pitt, which took place on the 22d, was a summons from the latter to Temple to attend the king on the Tuesday following. "Let me, my dear lord," writes Pitt to him, "express my own most earnest desire that you will be so good to set out to-morrow morning, and, if I may beg the favour, that you will come and take a bed at Hayes the same night. I am just returning to that place, finding it quite necessary to sleep in the country." Pitt described the king's manner to him as having been most gracious. "I will only say," he continues to write, "that things have advanced considerably in the audience of this day. The first audience was, as this, infinitely gracious, but not equally material. Upon the whole, I augur much good, as far as intentions go; and I am indeed touched with the manner and royal frankness which I had the happiness to find." Accordingly, on Tuesday, the 25th, Temple, having passed the preceding night at Hayes, repaired to Buckingham House, where, at ten o'clock in the morning, he was ushered into the royal presence. Pitt had previously intimated to him that, unless assured of his coöperation and support, it was his fixed determination to reject office, so that the impracticable peer was only too well aware of his personal importance at this momentous crisis. To the great mortification of the king, the earl,

in very mysterious language, declined the high post which was offered to him. His motives are to this day inexplicable. "He had a delicacy," he told the king, "which must always remain a secret." In vain the king urged him to reconsider his decision; in vain, after he had quitted the royal closet, the Duke of Grafton told him that he "would forfeit all character" if he refused; in vain his friend, George Onslow, implored him "for the sake of his country, for the sake of us all," to accept the treasury. Temple was inexorable. To his brother George, with whom in the course of the day he had an affectionate interview, he spoke the same mysterious language which he had used in the closet. In addition, he said, to the great difficulty of managing the House of Commons, he had another reason, "of a tender and delicate nature," which he must decline to explain. The motive could scarcely have been an unwillingness to supplant his brother George, inasmuch as Charles Townshend expressly assures us that "there would have been no difficulty" in that quarter. "Lord Temple," writes Lord Chesterfield to his son, "positively refused. There was evidently some trick in it, but what, is past my conjecturing: *Davus sum, non Œdipus.*"

As regards the conduct of Mr. Pitt during the negotiation, we have the high authority of the Duke of Cumberland that he entered "most thoroughly and heartily" into the king's views. There is,

moreover, a mass of evidence to prove how deep was the pain and disappointment with which he witnessed its failure. The negotiation, writes Charles Townshend, was broken off "against Mr. Pitt's judgment, declaration, and most earnest remonstrance." At one time we find Pitt speaking of Temple's secession as an "amputation;" and at another writing to Lord Lyttelton that this crisis of his life was "the most difficult and painful, on all accounts, that he had yet experienced."

Pitt has been severely censured for not having attempted to form an administration at all hazards, yet the reason which he set forth to the king for withholding his services on this occasion would seem to be sufficiently satisfactory. His health, he said, was such that, without the support of his powerful relations, it would be hopeless to attempt the formation of a vigorous administration. To Thomas Townshend he held the same language. Had he been younger, he said, or had he a single friend to whom he could have entrusted the treasury, he would not have shrunk from the task, notwithstanding the defection of Temple. To Lady Stanhope he writes, on the 20th of July: "All is now over as to me, and by a fatality I did not expect. I mean Lord Temple's refusing to take his share with me in the undertaking. We set out to-morrow morning for Somersetshire,[1] where

[1] To his seat at Burton Pynsent.

I propose, if I find the place tolerable, to pass not a little of the rest of my days."

Never, hitherto, during the king's short but troubled reign, had his affairs been in a more critical state. "In what distress," writes Charles Townshend, "is the king; in what confusion are these kingdoms!" In this fresh emergency, the king again applied to his uncle, the Duke of Cumberland, for his assistance and advice. The duke's conduct, when thus a second time appealed to, proved to be no less noble and disinterested than it had been on the former occasion. "I can oppose the Crown," he said, "when ministers do wrong, but will support it when now it is insulted." His first appeal was to the opposition Whigs; but the death of some, and the defection of others, had sadly thinned the ranks of that once formidable party. Some of them, moreover, objected that any administration unsupported by Pitt must speedily fall to pieces; some were too old, and the majority too young and inexperienced, to render their services of due value to the state. It was a pleasantry at the time that the king must necessarily continue Grenville as his minister, there being no other person in a tye-wig to preside at the Treasury Board. Fortunately, however, there was one individual, the Duke of Newcastle, who not only still retained a powerful influence over the Whig party, but whose love for patronage and power still continued unchilled by years and

neglect, and accordingly, by the united exertions of the two dukes, the well-known Rockingham administration was in time constructed. The Marquis of Rockingham was placed at the head of the treasury; the Duke of Grafton and General Conway were appointed secretaries of state; William Dowdeswell, a country gentleman of respectable talents and inflexible integrity, was selected to be chancellor of the exchequer; Lord Northington was continued as lord chancellor, and Lord Egmont as first lord of the admiralty. The Earl of Winchelsea, although in his seventy-seventh year, was appointed president of the Council, and the Duke of Newcastle, who was not much his junior, lord privy seal. It was not without a pang that the veteran duke relinquished his claim to the treasury. He was appeased, however, by being allowed to dispense the patronage of the Church, which, for the first and last time, was attached to the office of the privy seal. If, as is most probable, the treatment which he experienced from the Bench of Bishops, when driven from office in 1762, still rankled in his mind, it must have been not a little soothing to his pride to be thus able to reexhibit himself to the ingrate magnates of the Church, vested with all his former authority, either to withhold or to bestow.

Grenville, in the meantime, — buoyed up by very exaggerated conceptions of his own im-

portance and talents, and having had his position strengthened by his reconciliation with his brother, Temple, — had remained almost to the last moment under the delusion that his services were indispensable to his sovereign. The flattery or partiality of his friends and followers tended to confirm him in this persuasion. Not a day, he tells us, passed, but he received communications from "a great variety of persons," expressive of their indignation at the ill-treatment which he had experienced. The lord chancellor, he says, told him the "kingdom was lost" if he retired. Lord Mansfield, he adds, expressed himself in similar terms. Lord Holland, on the other hand, writes to George Selwyn, on the 4th of August: "The excessive self-conceit of Grenville, that could make his writers call him — if he did not write it himself — the greatest minister this country ever saw, as well as his pride and obstinacy, established him. It did not hurt him that he had a better opinion of himself than he, or perhaps anybody else, ever deserved. On the contrary, it helped him. But when the fool said upon that — 'the king cannot do without me,' *hoc nocuit.*" The length of time which was allowed to elapse without his being recalled to the palace was attributed by him to the king's unwillingness to compromise his dignity, or, rather, to use his own expression, to a natural "unwillingness to speak first." In the opinion of his colleague, Lord Eg-

mont, a "gentle behaviour" on the part of ministers would set all to rights. Still no summons came from the king, and Grenville was probably beginning to feel somewhat uneasy, when the following peremptory note was placed in his hands:

The Lord Chancellor to Mr. Grenville.

"WEDNESDAY, July 10, 1765.

"DEAR SIR: I have this moment received his Majesty's commands to signify to you his pleasure, that you attend his Majesty at St. James's this day, at 12 o'clock, with the seal of your office.

"I am very unhappy at conveying so unpleasing commands, as I have the honour to be with great respect, etc.,

"NORTHINGTON."

No less laconic was the letter of dismissal received by the Duke of Bedford:

The Duke of Grafton to the Duke of Bedford.

"WHITEHALL, July 10, 1765.

"MY LORD: — The king, after having done me the honour of conferring on me the seals of secretary of state, commanded me to acquaint your Grace that he had no further occasion of your services as lord president of his Council.

"I am really grieved that the disagreeable lot

should fall on me to communicate it to your Grace, as I have the honour to be,

"With the most unfeigned respect, etc.,

"GRAFTON."

Grenville has himself bequeathed us an account of his farewell interview with his royal master. To the ex-minister's natural and energetic request to be informed in what manner he had incurred his Majesty's displeasure, the king returned a curt and apparently haughty reply. Too much "constraint," he said, had been put upon him by his late ministers, who, instead of asking his advice, had expected him to "obey." Grenville, as he himself informs us, "started at that word." During the parting harangue delivered by the fallen minister, — which, by the bye, seems to have been a more than usually verbose and lengthy one, — the king listened to him with exemplary patience and marked civility. Yet neither in the closet, nor at the levee which the king held in the course of the afternoon, could Grenville elicit from his sovereign a single farewell word of approbation. At the levee, he says, the king asked him but "one cold question."

Grenville, as may readily be imagined, was impressed with the full conviction that Bute had been the secret adviser and author of his fall.[1] The

[1] The king assured Grenville at their farewell interview that Lord Bute had "had no hand in advising the present change."

Duke of Bedford was apparently of the same opinion. To Grenville, for instance, his Grace writes, on the 8th of July: "I can hardly bring myself to believe that any people will be hardy enough to undertake an administration which is constructed on no better foundation than the support of Lord Bute's favouritism." His creature, Rigby, echoes the words of his patron. "The Duke of Cumberland's political system," he writes, "grafted upon the Earl of Bute's stock, seems of all others the least capable of succeeding." On the other hand, more than one discomfited member of the late government ascribed the downfall of their party mainly to the enmity which existed between the princess dowager and the Duchess of Bedford. These gentlemen, wittily observed George Selwyn, put him in mind of thieves, who, "when on their way to execution, always assign their ruin to bad women."

CHAPTER XVI.

Marquis of Buckingham, Premier — Death of the Duke of Cumberland — Unhappy Married Life of the Duchess of Brunswick (Princess Augusta) — Ministerial Jealousy of the Influence of Lord Bute — Arrival of Alarming Intelligence from North America — First Symptoms of Revolutionary Feeling — Diminution of Colonial Trade — Debates in Parliament — The "Declaratory Act" — Repeal of the Stamp Act.

THE members of the new government kissed hands on the 10th of July, the same day on which Grenville delivered up the seals to the king. The Rockingham administration, even at its outset, presented but an indifferent prospect of stability. It was composed, for the most part, of an undisciplined force, deficient alike in parliamentary influence, in oratorical skill, in official experience, and administrative abilities. In addition to these difficulties, there lay before them the disheartening prospect of having to contend against the powerful Bedford and Grenville parties; against the underground intrigues and dangerous popularity of Temple, and, not impossibly, the open hostility, and the crushing eloquence of Pitt. Scarcely,

indeed, could the undertaking appear more hopeless to others, than to the new ministers and to their friends. Lord Rockingham, conscious of his own shortcomings, freely admitted the weakness of his position. Conway spoke of the attempt as a "perilous one." Walpole thought it a "wild proposal;" Lord Mansfield denounced it as madness and desperation. "It was a mere lute-string administration," said Charles Townshend, "pretty summer wear, but it would never stand the winter." Lord Chesterfield also writes to his son: "It is an heterogeneous jumble of youth and caducity, which cannot be efficient." If the new ministers, however, were deficient in experience and in abilities of a high order, they possessed, on the other hand, the advantages of birth, fortune, and clear judgment. They were united, moreover, by the bonds of mutual esteem. They were agreed on the capital political questions of the day. Their intentions were pure, and their reputations stainless.

The chief of this respectable phalanx, Charles, Marquis of Rockingham, had, previously to his having been called upon to fill the high office of first minister of the Crown, held no more responsible a post than that of a lord of the bedchamber. He was the son of a country gentleman of the name of Watson, who, on the demise of a kinsman, had succeeded to the barony of Rockingham. On the female side, however, he was descended

from the celebrated Thomas Wentworth, Earl of Strafford, whose noble estates had passed into his possession, and whose more aristocratic and euphonious name he had adopted. The father of the marquis had allied himself to the fortunes of Sir Robert Walpole, by whom he had been repaid, for his political partisanship and personal attachment, with no niggard liberality. During the twenty years that Walpole was at the head of the treasury, honours were showered on him with almost unexampled rapidity. He became a Knight of the Bath, lord lieutenant of the county of York, Baron of Waith, Viscount Hingham, Earl of Malton, and lastly, Marquis of Rockingham. "I suppose," was the good-natured remark of Sir Robert Walpole, "that we shall soon see our friend Malton in opposition, for he has had no promotion in the peerage for the last fortnight."

With the titles and splendid domain of his father, Lord Rockingham inherited also the Whig principles of his family, evidence of which he afforded, in a somewhat romantic manner, when only in his sixteenth year. He was an Eton boy, at home for the Christmas holidays, when the news reached Wentworth House that the Duke of Cumberland was in full march to give battle to Charles Edward and the Highland Clans. The young lord was seized with so irresistible a desire to display his loyalty and valour,

that, having enlisted a faithful groom into his service, he quitted Wentworth early one morning on pretence of hunting, and at the first favourable opportunity directed his horse's head toward the north. The earliest tidings of the missing heir, which were received by his relatives, were contained in a letter from himself, dated from the camp at Carlisle.

Lord Rockingham, at the period when he was appointed first lord of the treasury, was in his thirty-sixth year. Attached to the pursuits and amusements of private life, it was with no feigned reluctance that he was induced to accept that high and responsible post. Hitherto he had been chiefly known to his fellow countrymen on account of the large sums of money which he was in the habit of betting on horse-races, and as a munificent patron of the turf. The Duke of Cumberland, however, had discovered in him higher qualities than the world had yet given him credit for, whence his Royal Highness had not only prevailed upon the king to offer him the premiership, but, by his arguments and entreaties, induced the marquis to surmount his aversion for office. In his own opinion, Lord Rockingham told the duke, he should be much better able to serve his sovereign if allowed to remain in a private and independent position; but, he added, that if his friends thought otherwise, he was willing to sacrifice his inclinations to his

duty, and to serve in any capacity which might be most for the advantage of the state.[1]

The king, like the rest of the world, appears to have entertained but a mean opinion of Lord Rockingham's qualifications for filling high office. "I thought," he said, on one occasion, "that I had not two men in my bedchamber of less parts than Lord Rockingham." Much of this want of appreciation of his abilities was doubtless attributable to his timid and embarrassed manner of speaking in Parliament. To the close of his life he never rose to address the House of Lords without a nervous feeling of distress. Once, while he was wincing under the merciless raillery of Lord Sandwich, Lord Gower is said to have slily whispered to the latter: "Sandwich, how could you worry the poor dumb thing so!" Again, on another occasion, we find the king writing to his first minister: "I am much pleased that opposition has forced you to hear your own voice, which I hope will encourage you to stand forth in other debates."

But if Lord Rockingham, as a minister, laboured under many difficulties, he enjoyed, on the other hand, numerous advantages, derivable from high birth, from the possession of a princely

[1] "Like Godolphin, he loved gaming; and his singular wager with Lord Orford on a race between two geese, at Newmarket, has been recorded by Horace Walpole; but he overcame this propensity on entering public life."

fortune, from sound sense, from a vigorous understanding, and a high reputation for private virtue. He was superior to all duplicity; his political integrity was beyond all suspicion; even his enemies admitted that he held the interests of his country deeply at heart; and lastly, he was gifted with a power of acquiring the affection and confidence of others, which, during long years of adverse fortune, enabled him to secure, politically as well as personally, the devoted adhesion of the party who recognised him as their chief. Burke has done Lord Rockingham nothing more than justice, when he dwells on the "sound principles, enlarged mind, clear and sagacious sense, and unbroken fortitude" of his early patron. "Surely," writes Philip Thicknesse, who knew him well, "if there ever lived a truly good man the Marquis of Rockingham was such."

From the two new secretaries of state — the Duke of Grafton and General Conway[1] — Lord Rockingham received zealous, but certainly not too efficient aid. The former, from his love of pleasure and country pursuits, and the latter, from constitutional irresolution, had been almost as averse to accepting office as their leader himself.

[1] The Hon. Henry Seymour Conway was the second son of Francis, first Baron Conway, and brother to Francis, first Marquis of Hertford. After having served with reputation in his military capacity, and filled the high offices of secretary of state and commander-in-chief of the army, he died a field-marshal, July 9, 1795, at the age of seventy-five.

Moreover, there were two other prominent members of the administration, the Duke of Newcastle and Charles Townshend, who, the one from timidity, and the other from versatility and eccentricity of character, threatened to be sources of embarrassment, rather than of strength, to the government. So long, indeed, as the ministry enjoyed the powerful support of the Duke of Cumberland, the king's affairs were carried on with tolerable success. The high respect with which the duke was regarded by the public, his experienced sagacity and vigorous counsels, the credit which he had of late obtained with the king, and the familiar access which his exalted rank afforded him to the royal ear, contributed, so long as his life was spared, to animate and invigorate the administration which he had been the means of calling into existence. Scarcely four months, however, had elapsed since its formation, ere death deprived the government of its patron and mainstay. Notwithstanding his former unpopularity, the people of England united with ministers in lamenting the irreparable loss which they had each sustained. It was a notable fact that not only did the middle, and even the lower classes, put on mourning on the occasion; but that they wore it for a longer period than was enjoined by the *London Gazette*. Party feeling alone was backward in doing honour to the dead. "The Duchess of Bedford, then at Bath," writes Wal-

George the Third.

Photo-etching after the painting by Dayes.

pole, "distinguished her animosity by wearing slighter mourning for the duke than that prescribed by the court."

The Duke of Cumberland expired at his house in Upper Grosvenor Street, on the 31st October, 1765, in the forty-fifth year of his age. A series of cruel disappointments, and a load of bodily afflictions still more grievous, had for some years rendered him indifferent to life. "I should fear," wrote Charles Townshend, three weeks previously to the duke's death, "that his Royal Highness will not be long among us. His friends die so fast, I doubt whether his great spirit will not soon almost wish to be enlarged from a world which, to a man of habitual ill health, can have so few satisfactions." The duke might have applied to himself the words which Sir Robert Cecil addressed in his last illness to Sir Walter Coke: "Ease and pleasure quake to hear of death; but my life, full of cares and miseries, desireth to be dissolved." On the evening previous to his death he was playing at piquet with his old servant and friend, General Hodgson, who had fought by his side at the battle of Culloden, when the lookers-on observed that his manner grew confused, and that he seemed forgetful of the cards. On the following day, however, he was well enough to make his appearance at court, as well as to dine with Lord Albemarle and to drink tea with his niece, the Duchess of Brunswick. It was not till his return to Grosvenor

Street that any alarming symptom betrayed itself. Then, while alone with his servant, he complained of a feeling of suffocation, and of a strange sensation in one of his hands, at the same time desiring that a window should be opened. The servant, perceiving that his master changed colour, led him by the hand to the sofa, and suggested the propriety of sending for the duke's medical attendant, Sir Clifton Wintringham,[1] to which the duke replied, "Not yet." His *valet de chambre*, who was accustomed to bleed him, was then summoned, and was proceeding to open a vein, when the duke exclaimed: "It is too late! It is all over!" and immediately sank back, insensible. Before his old friend, Lord Albemarle, could arrive from his house in Arlington Street, the great heart was still, and the body cold. The king, to show his respect for his uncle's memory, gracefully conferred upon Lord Albemarle the Garter vacated by the death of his master.[2]

The allusion to the Duchess of Brunswick, in

[1] Sir Clifton Wintringham, baronet, chief physician to the Duke of Cumberland and afterward to George III., was born in 1710, and received his education at Trinity College, Cambridge, His death took place at his house at Hammersmith on the 9th of January, 1794. He was the author of several works on medical subjects.

[2] George, third Earl of Albemarle, had been aide-de-camp to the Duke of Cumberland at the battle of Fontenoy as well as at Culloden. His death took place on the 13th of October, 1772, only five months after the birth of his heir, William, the fourth earl.

the foregoing paragraph, reminds us of the fair princess who, eighteen months previously, had sailed as a bride from the shores of England, and who was now a visitor in her native land. Unhappily, during that interval she had endured all the distress contingent on the infidelities of a dissolute husband, and an alien and uncomfortable home. "Their palace at Brunswick," writes Rigby to the Duke of Bedford, "is a miserable wooden house, poorly furnished, and Brunswick one of the worst towns even in Germany." Thirty years afterward, we find the duchess talking to Lord Malmesbury of her husband's amours at this early period of their marriage, and of the pain which they had occasioned her. "She knew it all," she said; "it made her uneasy, but she held her tongue." "All we have heard," writes Rigby, "of their living very ill together is true, except that of his outward behaviour to her, which is respectful and full of attention. At the *bal masqué* at Brunswick he dances, at the Opera House, with the opera girls before her face, and makes no scruple of all kinds of infidelities." Under these circumstances, the duchess, as may readily be imagined, seized the first opportunity of passing a few months in quiet with her own family, and in her own country. "This morning," writes Rigby, on the 8th of September, "Harry St. John [1] came to breakfast

[1] The Hon. Henry St. John, brother of Frederick, second Viscount Bolingbroke, was groom of the bedchamber to Edward,

with me, having left his master and the Brunswicks turning into Harwich harbour. They passed by in the Duke of York's post-coach, between nine and ten; his Majesty's coaches coming no farther than Romford to meet them. Harry tells me nothing was ever equal to the joy she is in at coming hither, which she did not attempt to disguise at home, for at Brunswick she told them all she hoped she should die in England." Nearly half a century afterward this melancholy wish was gratified.

In the meantime, although, on more than one point, the political opinions of the new ministers differed very materially from those of the king, there can be no doubt that, when he called them to his counsels, it was with the determination to extend to them his fullest confidence and support. Delighted at his emancipation from the tyranny of the Duke of Bedford and Grenville, the king wisely yielded to every demand made upon him by their successors, while ministers, on their part,

Duke of York, and afterward to the king. It would seem by Lord Malmesbury's diaries, that the Duke of Brunswick was at this period in love with the celebrated Lady Diana Beauclerk. There are some pleasing letters of "Harry St. John" among the Selwyn Correspondence, where he is somewhat irreverently nicknamed by his friends "the Baptist." Horace Walpole somewhere speaks of Lord Bolingbroke and his brother Henry as "Lord Corydon and Captain Corydon." The latter afterward sat in the House of Commons as member for Wotton Basset, and rose to be a general in the army. His death took place August 31, 1771.

prudently refrained from attempting to impose too harsh conditions on their sovereign. On one point only — and unhappily it was a sore one with the king — they were so imprudent as to make an exception. Willing, as they afterward showed themselves, to court the aid and support of Lord Bute and his friends, they at this period entertained feelings of jealousy toward that nobleman, scarcely less intense than those which had formerly tortured the suspicious minds of their predecessors. Thus, at a great meeting which was held at the house of the Duke of Newcastle, preparatory to their accepting office, we find it unanimously resolved that absolute proof must be given to the world that, neither "directly nor indirectly, should Lord Bute have any concern or influence in public affairs," and that, without such proof being given, it would be useless to endeavour to form an administration. No fewer than eighteen "lords and gentlemen" agreed to this remarkable resolution. Accordingly, the king was again subjected to the same suspicions, and compelled to repeat the same promises, which had been inflicted upon him by the Bedford and Grenville section of the Whig party. The Earl of Northumberland, instrumental though he had been in turning out the late ministers, was excluded from office merely because he was the son-in-law of Bute; and lastly, although the restoration of Mr. Stuart Mackenzie would have been alike a graceful concession to the king's

feelings, and nothing more than an act of justice due to Mr. Mackenzie himself, ministers, probably from fear of losing credit with the public, withheld the boon. In vain Walpole urged upon his relative, General Conway, the justice and policy of the measure. "To talk to Conway," he writes, "against public opinion, was preaching to the winds."

In the meantime, the attention, not only of the government, but of the whole nation, had been engrossed by the startling news which had of late continued to arrive from America. The MS. despatches, addressed by the naval commander-in-chief in America — Rear Admiral Lord Colville — to the lords of the admiralty, are filled with alarming particulars. For instance, in one despatch it is intimated that unless the stamps for Rhode Island are put on board the *Cygnet* vessel-of-war, there is every prospect of their being burned by the inhabitants. Governor Bernard writes to his lordship that such is the "increasing licentiousness" of the people of Massachusetts, he fears it will "oblige him to quit his government." The Governor of New Jersey requests that the stamps, on their arrival, may be lodged on board ships-of-war till he is able to take measures for their security. When the *Sardoine* sloop-of-war — in convoy of the stamps for Pennsylvania and Maryland — enters the harbour of Philadelphia, she discovers "all the vessels in it having their ensigns

hoisted either half-mast up, or spread in the top-mast shrouds with the union downward." The Governor of New York reports his inability to answer for the safety of the stamps, even though they are lodged in the fort; and lastly, the stamps for the Jerseys are compelled to be put on board the *Garland* and *Coventry* ships-of-war.

Moreover, the information which reached England from other sources was no less alarming. No sooner had it become known in America that the royal assent had been given to the Stamp Act, than the colonies assumed an appearance of general mourning. At Boston and Philadelphia the church-bells were muffled, and tolled as for the dead. The colours of the ships in the harbours were hoisted only half-mast high, and lastly, when the act was reprinted and circulated, a likeness of a death's-head was substituted for the royal arms. But far worse became the aspect of affairs so soon as attempts were made to carry the fatal act into operation. In more than one city, tumults had taken place which already threatened a civil war. In more than one port, the ships which brought over the stamps were seized. The stamps were burnt. The revenue officers were tarred and feathered and their houses pillaged. In some of the provinces the governors trembled in their strongholds. "I am more and more grieved," writes the king to Conway, on the 6th of December, "at the accounts from America.

Where this spirit will end is not to be said. It is undoubtedly the most serious matter that ever came before Parliament. It requires more deliberation, candour, and temper, than I fear it will meet with."

It was now that the celebrated Patrick Henry —

> "the forest-born Demosthenes,
> Whose thunder shook the Philip of the seas" —

first raised his impassioned voice, in the Colony of Virginia, against the tyranny of the mother country, and, in the words of Jefferson, "gave the earliest impulse to the ball of revolution." "Cæsar," he boldly exclaimed, in the House of Burgesses, at Williamsburg, "Cæsar had his Brutus; Charles the First his Cromwell, and George the Third —" Here the Speaker interrupted him by calling "Treason," which was reiterated by the great majority of the Burgesses. Henry for a moment fixed his eye on the Speaker, and then calmly concluded the broken sentence, — "And George the Third may profit by their example. If this be treason, make the most of it." Fifty-six years afterward, we find the venerable Thomas Jefferson recalling the effect which, when a student of law at Williamsburg, the memorable oratory of Patrick Henry produced on his mind. "I attended the debate," he writes, "at the door of the lobby of the House of Burgesses, and heard the splendid display of Mr.

Henry's talents as a popular orator. They were great indeed, — such as I have never heard from any other man. He appeared to me to speak as Homer wrote."

One of the consequences of the discontents in the colonies, was an alarming falling off in the trade of Great Britain. Not only were associations formed in America to exclude the importation and use of British manufactures, but the colonists unhesitatingly refused to discharge the large debts which they had incurred with the principal English merchants, for goods and wares imported from the mother country. "Funerals, without mourning or the giving of English gloves," writes a correspondent from Boston on the 30th of March, "is become so fashionable, that there has been but one burial, for many months past, in the old-fashioned way." By these means, trade between the two countries was almost ruined. The merchants of Bristol and Liverpool were reduced to a state of bankruptcy. In the manufacturing towns, a third of the artisans were out of employment. Under these circumstances, the people of England demanded, scarcely less clamorously than the people of America, the repeal of the obnoxious Stamp Act.

In the meantime ministers were placed in a most difficult dilemma. No one doubted that the seditious proceedings in America might be suppressed by military force, but ministers having so

recently denounced the Stamp Act in its progress through Parliament, as an unjust and impolitic measure, with what conscience, it was asked, could they now proceed to uphold it by the sword? On the other hand, presuming ministers to have been inclined to yield to the popular outcry, there lay before them the humiliating alternative of repealing an act of Parliament, merely because it was unpalatable to a large portion of the community. It was argued that such a concession to popular clamour would create a precedent of the very worst description; that an administration which suffered itself to be influenced by intimidation was unfit to exist for an hour; and lastly, that, were the government to yield on the present occasion, it would be tantamount to an invitation to the people of England to oppose the next distasteful act of Parliament, by the same riotous and mutinous acts to which their American brethren had had recourse.

Moreover, presuming ministers to have been desirous of repealing the Stamp Act, was it likely that the Parliament of Great Britain — composed mainly of high-spirited, if not of very enlightened men — would at a moment's warning be induced to stultify their recent proceedings, and reverse their late judgment; not, be it remembered, in consequence of new evidence, and respectful petitions and remonstrances having been brought under their consideration, but notoriously at the beck of

open and violent resistance, and unconstitutional threats? Was it likely that the legislature should feel no resentment at the insulting manner in which its statutes had been received by the colonists? Was it to be expected that a young and high-spirited monarch should at once pardon the affronts which had been put upon his crown, and, by cancelling his late deliberate act, lay himself open to the offensive charge of have been intimidated into concession? Lastly, considering how prejudiced Grenville was in favour of American taxation, and how inclined his nature was to violent and arbitrary measures, was it conceivable that he, and his political friends, should advocate any other policy, than that of asserting the authority of the mother country by force of arms?

Happily, ministers had at their option the choice of four different lines of policy. The first — which, had they adopted it, would have secured them the hearty support of Grenville — was to treat the colonists as rebels, and to enforce obedience at the point of the bayonet. The second, which was subsequently advocated by Pitt, was to declare the taxation of America an unwarrantable and unconstitutional measure, and to propose its immediate repeal. The third, which emanated from the king, was to insist on the Stamp Act being continued on the statute book, but so far to modify its provisions, as to render it as little oppressive as possible to the colonists. The fourth, which was that

afterward adopted by ministers, was to repeal the act as an unjust and an unwise measure, but, at the same time, to uphold the credit of the mother country, by asserting her abstract right to tax her colonial dependencies.

The many difficulties which, at this period, beset ministers, might have alarmed much wiser and more experienced statesmen. Parliament was appointed to meet on the 17th of December, a day to which the public looked forward with the most anxious expectancy. On that day, ministers were certain to encounter the bitterest hostility on the part of Grenville and his friends. That unbending and irascible man — furious with the colonists on account of the insulting circumstances under which they had rejected his favourite measure, and still more furious with ministers for contemplating its annulment — waited but for the assembling of Parliament to move a formal address to the throne, expressive of the resentment and indignation of the Commons of Great Britain at the rebellious conduct of the American people. Pitt, indeed, might yet come to the rescue of ministers; but even so late as the 14th of January, the day on which he took his seat in the House of Commons, we find him keeping the world in entire ignorance of his sentiments and intentions. When that day at length arrived, more than a year had elapsed since he had last made his appearance in Parliament. For some

weeks past he had been confined to a sick-chamber at Bath, suffering from his old complaint the gout, and brooding over what he himself styles the present "distracted and miserable state of affairs." The resistance, however, of the American people had completely aroused him. "My resolution," he writes to his friend Nuthall, on the 9th of January, "is taken; and, if I can crawl or be carried, I will deliver my mind and heart upon the state of America."

In the meantime, Pitt had not been more anxious to reappear in Parliament than the public was to welcome him back to public life. Upon his genius, his patriotism, and his resources, were fixed the hopes of the nation; and consequently it no sooner became known that he proposed to take a part in the debates after the Christmas recess, than the anxiety to listen once more to his renowned eloquence, and to learn his views in regard to the momentous question which was agitating alike the Old and the New World, became general and intense. When at length he made his appearance in the House of Commons, he was still suffering from lameness. At the first opportunity he rose to address the House. Never had his demeanour in that assembly been more haughty; never did his eloquence prove more brilliant, nor his conduct more eccentric. Of the late ministers he spoke with a withering disdain, and of their measures with a sweeping disapproval. Toward

the new ministers he exhibited scarcely more forbearance. "Their characters," he said, "are fair, and I am always glad when men of fair character engage in his Majesty's service. But, notwithstanding, I love to be explicit. I cannot give them my confidence; pardon me, gentlemen," he continued, bowing toward the ministerial bench, "confidence is a plant of slow growth in an aged bosom; youth is the season of credulity."

Having thus vented his personal spleen, the "Great Commoner" reverted to the important question which immediately occupied men's minds. "It is a long time, Mr. Speaker," he said, "since I have attended in Parliament. When the resolution was taken in the House to tax America, I was ill in bed. If I could have endured to have been carried in my bed, — so great was the agitation in my mind for the consequences, — I would have solicited some kind hand to have laid me down on this floor, to have borne my testimony against it." He then, in the most powerful and emphatic language, delivered it as his settled conviction that, supreme as was the legislative power of the mother country on all other points, yet, inasmuch as America was unrepresented in the British Parliament, Great Britain had no right to tax her people without their own consent. "They are the subjects of this kingdom," he exclaimed, "equally entitled with yourselves to all the natural rights of mankind, and the peculiar privileges of Englishmen;

equally bound by its laws, and equally participating in the Constitution of this free country. The Americans are the sons, not the bastards, of England."

From the deep impression which Pitt's eloquence had evidently made on the House, it must have been sufficiently manifest to ministers that, unless they either shaped their policy according to his views, or at least secured his forbearance, if not his full support, their tenure of power would become more precarious than ever.[1] Accordingly, when General Conway, the leader of the ministerial party, rose to address the House, his language to Pitt was singularly deferential. He was happy and proud, he said, in being able to declare that his own sentiments were conformable with those of the right honourable gentleman. Accident alone, he added, had raised him to the high post which he so unworthily filled, and happy should he feel to resign it to that gentleman whenever he should think proper to receive it from his hands. "But two things," he said, "fell from that gentleman which give me pain, as whatever falls from that gentleman falls from so great a height as to make a

[1] Lord Rockingham writes to the king on the following day: "That your Majesty's present administration will be shook to the greatest degree, if no further attempt is made to get Mr. Pitt to take a cordial part, is much too apparent to be disguised." And he adds: "The events of yesterday in the House of Commons have shown the amazing power and influence which Mr. Pitt has, whenever he takes part in debate."

deep impression." He then proceeded to exonerate ministers from a charge which Pitt had preferred against them, of having kept Parliament too long in ignorance of the distracted state of the colonies; and lastly, spoke to a bold insinuation of the great statesman that the king was governed by the secret agency of Bute. "An overruling influence," he said, "has been hinted it. I see nothing of it; I feel nothing of it; I disclaim it for myself, and, as far as my discernment can reach, for all the rest of his Majesty's ministers."

Every eye was now fixed on Grenville, who proceeded, in a laboured but able speech, to defend the justice and wisdom of his favourite measure. The tumults in America, he asserted, already bordered on actual rebellion, and if the pernicious doctrines to which the House had that day listened were allowed to go forth unrefuted to the world, he feared that those tumults would soon assume the form of revolution. What, he asked, was the real purport of those doctrines, but an invitation to America to draw the sword? Taxation, he insisted, was a part of the sovereign power: it had been exercised not only over the East India and other chartered companies, and over the proprietors of stock, but also over many of the great manufacturing towns, and over the Palatinate of Chester and the Bishopric of Durham, long before those towns and districts had been allowed to send representatives to Parliament. When he had pro-

posed to introduce the Stamp Act, no one had questioned the right of taxing America. Protection and obedience, he said, ought to be reciprocal, and, in return for the protection which Great Britain extended to her colonies, she was entitled to expect and enforce submission to her will. Had not England, he inquired, incurred a vast debt in protecting America? Had not the Act of Navigation — that palladium of British commerce — been generously relaxed in her favour? And now, he exclaimed, when she is required to contribute a small amount to the public fund, what is the consequence? "They renounce your authority, insult your officers, and break out, I might almost say, into open rebellion." One passage in Grenville's speech seems to have greatly offended Pitt. "Tell me," he said, "when the Americans were emancipated. The seditious spirit of the colonies owes its birth to the factions in this House."

With a countenance strongly expressive of resentment and disdain, Pitt rose to reply; but having already spoken, the rules of the House precluded his speaking a second time, and consequently those members to whom his arguments were unpalatable, loudly called him to order. So great, however, was his authority in that assembly, so eager was the House to hear his reply to so able a declamation as that of Grenville, that precedents were for the time forgotten, and amidst

almost universal cries of "Go on," he again rose to address his audience. His look, his voice, his attitude, were never effaced from the memories of those then present. Many of the words which he uttered will ever be famous. "The gentleman," — as he contemptuously designated Grenville, who sat next but one to him, — "The gentleman," he said, "tells us that America is obstinate; that America is almost in open rebellion. Sir, I rejoice that America has resisted. Three millions of people so dead to all the feelings of liberty, as voluntarily to submit to be slaves, would have been fit instruments to make slaves of all the rest. I come not here armed at all points with law cases and acts of Parliament, with the statute book doubled down in dog's-ears, to defend the cause of liberty. If I had, I myself would have cited the two cases of Chester and Durham. I would have cited them to show that, even under arbitrary reigns, Parliaments were ashamed of taxing a people without their consent, and allowed them representatives." Then, repeating his former contemptuous expression, he proceeded: "The gentleman asks when were the colonies emancipated? But I desire to know when they were made slaves?" He knew, he said, the valour of British troops. He knew the skill of British officers. In a good cause, and on a sound bottom, the force of this country could crush America to atoms; but, in such a cause as the present one, success would

be hazardous. "America," he exclaimed, "if she fall, will fall like the strong man. She will embrace the pillars of the state, and will pull down the Constitution along with her. Is this your boasted peace? Not to sheathe the sword in its scabbard, but to sheathe it in the bowels of your fellow countrymen!" The debate[1] terminated without the House coming to a division.

Similar arguments and language to those of Pitt were subsequently made use of in the House of Lords by Chief Justice Pratt, now Lord Camden; language, by the way, which proved so offensive to Grenville that he denounced it in the Commons as a libel upon Parliament, and threatened to have the printer brought to their bar. "My position," said the great lawyer and patriot, "is this. I repeat it. I will maintain it to my latest hour. Taxation and representation are inseparable. This position is founded on the laws of nature. It is more. It is itself an eternal law of nature; for whatever is a man's own is absolutely his own. No man has a right to take it from him without his consent, either expressed by himself or his representatives. Whoever attempts to do it attempts an injury. Whoever does it commits a robbery. He throws down and destroys the distinction between liberty and slavery." "I would ask," writes King Stanislaus of Poland to General Lee, "why it is that the right of sending repre-

[1] On the address of thanks to the throne.

sentatives to the British Parliament is not accorded to the colonies. Representation and taxation would then go together, and the mother and daughters would be indissolubly united. Otherwise I see no alternative but oppression or complete independence."

But, on the other hand, Lord Mansfield, Burke, and most of the ablest statesmen and lawyers of the day, took a very different view of this important question. In their opinion, the authority of the British legislature over the entire empire was supreme and illimitable. According to Lord Mansfield, with whom we find Lord Campbell fully concurring, there can be no distinction, as far as power is concerned, between a law to tax and a law for any other purpose. Junius was of the same opinion as Lord Mansfield. "The Stamp Act," writes Lord Macaulay, "was indefensible, not because it was beyond the constitutional competence of Parliament, but because it was unjust and impolitic, sterile of revenue, and fertile in discontents." Supposing, for instance, that the sovereign, the Lords, and the Commons, were agreed in passing an act of Parliament for burning the shipping at Liverpool, or sending the lord chancellor to the block, such acts would no doubt be atrocious and indefensible, but they would nevertheless be as valid as any other enactments in the statute book. In like manner, it was argued, the Stamp Act might be

a very unwise measure, but of the right of Parliament to pass it there could be no reasonable doubt.

In the meantime, a meeting of ministers, which had taken place at Lord Rockingham's residence during the Christmas recess, had broken up without their having arrived at any final and definite resolution in regard to their American policy. The bold language, however, and high authority of Pitt, appear to have decided them, and accordingly it was determined so far to meet his views, as to introduce into Parliament a bill for the absolute repeal of the Stamp Act; preceded, however, and qualified by another measure, — subsequently known as the Declaratory Bill, — which asserted the supreme sovereignty of the British legislature over the colonies. The wisdom of this supplemental bill has been often, and with good reason, called in question.[1] Indeed, when we consider how calculated it was to alarm and irritate the Americans, without conferring any corresponding advantages upon the mother country, it certainly

[1] It is but fair to the king and to the Rockingham ministry to state that no less high an authority than Benjamin Franklin, — in the evidence given by him before the House of Commons, — in February, 1776, delivered it as his opinion that no ill consequences need be apprehended in America from an assertion of abstract right on the part of the mother country.

Question. — "As to the right, do you think, if the Stamp Act is repealed, that the North Americans will be satisfied?"

Answer. — "I believe they will."

bears the appearance of a somewhat irrational measure. To insist, as an abstract right, upon that which we admittedly dare not maintain, is, to say the least, an anomaly. Moreover, had ministers adopted, and carried, Pitt's celebrated proposition that the taxation of the colonies was an illegal measure, it would at once have swept away every difficulty from their path, and no doubt have satisfied the minds of the Americans.

But, before we accuse the Rockingham administration of a gross and palpable error, we should in the first instance inquire whether Pitt's proposition was sound in law, and secondly, whether, even if ministers had been inclined to adopt it as a part of their policy, it would have been in their power to carry such a resolution through Parliament? The first of these questions had already met with a negative answer, and so also, in the opinion of many unbiassed persons, ought the second to be met. So recently, and so daringly, had the Americans disputed the authority of the British legislature; so many aggravating and deliberate insults had attended their resistance to the laws, that unless the national honour had been propitiated by

Question. — "Why do you think so?"

Answer. — "I think the resolutions of right will give them very little concern if they are never attempted to be carried into practice. The colonies will probably consider themselves in the same situation in that respect with Ireland. They know you claim the same right with regard to Ireland, but you never exercise it."

a vehement legislative assertion of inherent right, neither the Lords nor Commons, we imagine, and much less the king, would have been prevailed upon to revoke their former untoward enactment. The mere fact, that when, at a later period, Pitt formally submitted his proposition to the House of Commons, only two members voted in its favour, and that he himself forbore to press for a division, appears to be sufficiently suggestive of the probable fate which would have attended it, under whosesoever auspices it might have been brought under the consideration of Parliament.

The fact is, that the Declaratory Act created but little sensation in the country. It was carried in the House of Commons without a division. "I am just out of bed, my dearest wife," writes Pitt to Lady Chatham, after one of the exciting debates of this time, "and considering the great fatigue, and not getting to bed till past four, tolerably well; my hand not worse, my country not better. We debated strenuously the rights of America. The resolution passed, for England's right to do what the treasury pleases with three millions of free men. Lord Camden, in the Lords, divine." Lord Camden divided the Upper House, but only four peers — Lords Shelburne, Paulet, Cornwallis, and Torrington — supported him with their suffrages.

Hitherto there had been no violent conflict, in either House of Parliament, between the different

parties in the state, but very different promised to be the scene, when, on the 21st of February, General Conway rose from his seat in the House of Commons, and formally moved for permission to bring in a bill for repealing at once the obnoxious Stamp Act. The House was crowded with members; the galleries and lobby were filled with merchants from the principal seaport towns, waiting with intense anxiety the result of the impending debate. Seldom, within the walls of St. Stephen's, had party feeling run higher; never had a question of more vital national importance been under discussion beneath its roof. Many and specious were the arguments made use of by the speakers on both sides of the House. What authority, demanded the members of the opposition, or what dignity, would remain to Parliament and the Crown, if for the future their enactments were to be regarded as mere temporary measures, to be flung aside at the first yell of popular discontent, or on the first outbreak of mob insurrection? Would not the national honour, they asked, be sacrificed by such an unworthy concession? Would it not be universally ascribed by the American people to pusillanimity on the part of the British legislature? Would not a repeal of the Navigation Act be the next demand of the colonists, and a recognition of their national independence the next?

On the other hand, the arguments adduced by

ministers and their friends were far more weighty. By the continued exaction, they said, of the present obnoxious impost, the trade of Great Britain must be irretrievably ruined. Not only, they argued, were its proceeds of comparatively trifling consideration, but the tax itself was the more oppressive, inasmuch as the burden of it fell chiefly upon the poorer classes. It amounted, according to the best computation, to little more than £100,000 a year; whereas, not only had the repudiated debts of the colonists to the British merchants reached the large sum of £950,000, but already orders for British manufactures had been countermanded, to the additional amount of £400,000. America, it was further insisted, might, at any moment she pleased, place herself under the protection of France or Spain; or, even should she abstain from contracting either of these fatal alliances, it was in her power, in the event of a civil war, to summon no fewer than one hundred and fifty thousand armed men into the field, whereas the British military force in America consisted of only five thousand men, who, moreover, laboured under the serious disadvantage of being scattered over three thousand miles of difficult territory. Rebellion in the colonies, insurrection in the principal manufacturing towns at home, the destruction of British commerce, — such, in the opinion of the ministers, would be the consequences of permitting Gren-

ville's fatal measures to remain upon the statute book.

Happily, when the House of Commons divided at half-past one o'clock in the morning, ministers were declared to have a large majority; the numbers being 275 to 167. The members dispersed in a state of great excitement. As the well-known chiefs of the two great political parties passed through the crowd of merchants and other persons, who thronged the avenues leading to the House of Commons, they were individually greeted with expressions of applause or disapprobation, according to the part which they had played in the memorable debate. Conway was the first to make his appearance; his countenance radiant with satisfaction at the triumph which he had achieved for his party, and at the essential service which he had rendered to humanity and to his country. Burke, in a misplaced quotation from the Scriptures, describes it "as it had been the face of an angel." The crowd, as they formed an avenue to allow him to pass, not only thanked and congratulated him, but, as his carriage drove off, honoured him with three several rounds of huzzas. But if the reception of Conway by the bystanders had been enthusiastic, far more so was their reception of Pitt. As soon as he appeared, every head was uncovered; the huzzas were redoubled; the more zealous of his admirers attended him to his sedan-chair; numbers followed him to his house in Bond

Street with shouts and blessings. Grenville, on the contrary, was received with groans and hisses. Exasperated beyond all power of self-control, he seized one of the most vociferous by the throat. But for the man's pusillanimity, the consequences might have been serious. "Well!" said the offender, "if I may not hiss, at least I may laugh." Grenville shook the fellow from his grasp, and allowed him to go about his business.

END OF VOLUME I.

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